

॥ श्रीः ॥

BHAGAVAD GEETA

S.M.S.O. Sabha, Publication No. 217

Vol. 2
Chap. IV to VI

by

G.M. Padmanabhachar B.A., B.L.,
Coimbatore



Published by
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A Critical Study
of
BHAGAVAD GEETA

Vol. - II
Chapters IV - VI

By
Sri C.M. Padmanabhachar B.A., B.L.,
Advocate
(Son of Madhwanatha Muni)
Coimbatore

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Son of Madhwanatha Muni , Coimbatore.

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C.M. Padmanabhachar

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE FOR THE PRESENT PUBLICATION

Sriman Madhwa Siddhanta Onnahini Sabha is proud in publishing the reprint version of the book Srimad Bhagavad Gita originally printed by Sri C.M.Padmanabhachar, B.A., B.L., Coimbatore, in the year 1916.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita is understood by one and all as an universal teaching, supreme philosophical guidance taught by Sarvothama 'Sri Krishna to all jeevas and it is the crux or essence of all Vedas, Upanishads and all sastras as told in Mahabharata

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः ।

पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीताऽमृतं महत् ॥

Sarvo upanishado gavo dogdha gopalanandana :

*Partho vathsa: sudhir bhoktha dhugdham-geethamrutam
mahath — 4/11*

Mahabharata proudly announces that those persons who have in their heart the four 'Ga' - kaaras viz., Gita, Ganga, Gayatri & Govinda will have no recurring births

गीता, गङ्गा च गायत्री, गोविन्देति हृदि स्थिते ।

चतुर् 'ग' -कार संयुक्ते पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥

*Geetha ganga cha gayathri govindeti hrudhi sthithe
Chathur 'GA' kara samyukthe punar janma na vidyathe — 4/12*

SMSO Sabha has undertaken the great task of publishing the Srimad Bhagavad Gita with Sri Madhva Bashya in English. It was a rarest co-incidence that when Mr.R.Ananthan, Hony. Secretary was asking Mr. G.V.Bindhu Madhavan about the possibilities of reprinting of this version, one Mr. Dwarakanath of USA let known his intention to assist a similar publication at the same point of time. In the execution of the above great task, it was decided to re-publish the first Shatka viz., the first six chapters published in the year 1916 by Honourable Sri C.M.Padmanabhachar, B.A., B.L., noted High Court Vakil and a first formal Secretary of the SMSO Sabha, Tiruchanoor.

The Second Shatka was already published in Sanskrit by learned Sri D.V. Subbachar, a Chartered Accountant from Coimbatore and accordingly it has been decided to publish the translated version of the Second Shatka which will be done by his noble son Sri T.S.Raghavendran. The third shatka is being rendered into English by Sri T.S.Raghavendran, M.A., B.L., son of Sri D.V. Subbachar and the present Joint Secretary of the SMSO Sabha.

Accordingly, we are going to publish Srimad Bhagavad Gita, all the 18 chapters in approximately six volumes of about 700 to 800 pages per volume.

The First Shatka, i.e. Sri C.M.Padmanabhachar's book being 90 years old, only one copy of the book was available for type-setting. It contained several broken pages. This caused delay in type-setting and also in

proof correction. Such difficulties will not be there in respect of the remaining publications.

Sri C.M.Padmanbhachar's book is based on the authorities of about 10 works. He has made a comparative study of all Vedantas and has brought out an elaborate Dvaita version which we hope all will enjoy. Viswa Madhva Sangh of USA through generous hearts of several persons have made a handsome contribution in bringing out this publication. Detailed list of donors of the above and others is annexed.

Our thanks are due to dedicated service of proof correction work done by Sri C.H.Raghoothamachar, Coimbatore, for the present publication. *Srimushnam* Sri V. Nagarajachar, Editor "SRI MADHVA SIDDHANTA" & "SRI SUDHA", Srirangam and Sri N. Sethumadhavan, Proprietor of M/s. Veda Vidya Printers, Srirangam have done a commendable service for the elegant and neat printing of this publication.

May Lord Sri Hari-Vayugalu bless us to render more and more humble dedicated service to the cause of the great Dwaita Vedanta which is the only Truth based on the Apourusheya Vedas and supported by all Sadagamas.

R. Ananthan, B.Sc., FCA,
Chartered Accountant,
 Hony. Secretary,
 S.M.S.O. Sabha,
 Tiruchanoor.

TIRUPUR
 12.6.2007, Tuesday
 Sarvajit Nama Samvatsara
 Adhika Jesta Krishna Dwadhashi.

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Acknowledgment.

Sriman Madhwa Siddhantonnahini Sabha

Tiruchanur, Tirupati

*hereby Acknowledges the donation of
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prosperity for all the members of the sangha.*



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peace and prosperity for all.



FOREWORD

BY DEWAN BAHADUR K. KRISHNASWAMI RAO, C.I.E.

Retired Dewan of Travancore.

Sri Madhwa Shastra Sampanna C.M. Padmanabhacharyar, High Court Vakil, Coimbatore, has done eminent service to the cause of the Dwaita Literature by publishing in English, the BHAGAVAD GEETA with his commentaries thereon. He belongs to the illustrious Tamraparni family which has been enjoying a high reputation for the proficiency of its members in Sanskrit literature generally, and more particularly in Dwaita Philosophy. His father is one of the most learned pandits now living. Mr. Padmanabhacharyar's acknowledged proficiency both in English and Sanskrit and the religious education and training he had under his renowned father may be taken as guarantee for the accuracy and soundness of the interpretations he has given to the texts in accordance with the doctrines of the Dwaita School of Philosophy. His great work in English, *The Life and Teachings of Sri Madhwa*, has already made him famous with the students of sacred literature.

It is hardly necessary to state that the BHAGAVAD GEETA is held in the highest esteem by all schools of Hindu Philosophy and enjoys a world-wide reputation and popularity for its sublime teach-

ings. The absence of commentaries on this most venerable work according to the tenets of the Dwaita School, in languages other than Sanskrit, has all along been greatly felt; and therefore Mr. Padmanabhacharyar deserves the thanks of the literary world for supplying the great want.

The method which the commentator has adopted is very commendable. Each Sanskrit sloka (verse) of the Geeta is printed in Devanagari characters; it is followed by each word in the sloka with its English equivalent; and then comes the English translation of the sloka as a whole. The commentaries on each appear under the translation in easy and elegant English. At the end of each important chapter, a lucid summary of the doctrines and interpretations of all the three schools is given. No student can desire for more help to his study of the BHAGAVAD GEETA than what is contained in the volume before us.

In his commentaries, Mr. Padmanabhacharyar gives prominence to the interpretation of Sri Madhwacharya, the greatest exponent of the Dwaita System of Philosophy; and reviews at length the difference between this interpretation and those given by the Adwaita and Visishtadwaita schools, and shows why the interpretation of Sri Madhwacharya should be preferred to those of the other Acharyas.

The present volume consists of the first six chapters of the BHAGAVAD GEETA, which chiefly treat of God (Paramatma) and souls (Jeeva or Atmas), their nature and mutual relations, the duties (Dharmas)

that men have to perform and the way to salvation (emancipation from Samsara of the cycle of births and deaths). The Geeta preaches the highest ideal of duty under all conditions of life.

Arjuna (the great hero of the Mahabharata war) hesitated to do his duty as a Kshatriya (warrior) in the Great War between his eldest brother (Yudhishtira) and his cousin (Duryodhana), as he found arrayed in arms on the opposite side, his venerable elders, preceptors and dearest relations. He strongly expressed his great abhorrence to the killing of those men and his determination to retire from the battlefield. Sri Krishna who is an incarnation of God, with His unlimited and natural love and affection for the righteous, had most graciously condescended to be the Driver (Sarathi) of Arjuna's chariot, during the war. He explained to the hesitating hero, and through him, to the whole world, that in a war of a just cause, the killing of those who are engaged in actual fight on the opposite side, is no sin; that it is a great fallacy to suppose that the destruction of the body which is only an external and mortal covering of the immortal soul, is the destruction of the soul within; that souls change their bodies as men change their bodies as men change their raiment; that death comes in the same way as birth, childhood, manhood and old age, in natural succession; that death is the common and inevitable lot of life in all forms and conditions; that the vindication of a right cause as a matter of disinterested duty is not only the highest merit but also the surest path to salvation; that even from a temporal point of view, retirement from the battlefield is worse than death itself to a world-re-

nowned hero; for such a retirement would be viewed by the public as cowardice and would bring unbearable ridicule and disgrace; that even if Arjuna were killed in the war by his foes, it would be good, for his immortal soul would go to Swarga (intermediate region of bliss) that God, is His inscrutable providence, ordains and regulates all matters, small or great; that it is not possible for humanity to do or not to do anything against His decrees; and that Duty which belongs to every person as the member of a family, as the member of a society, as the subject of a state and as a creature of God, must be performed with physical, moral and mental purity, and with complete resignation to His will. To impress on the mind of Arjuna, the highest authority of the teachings given, Sri Krishna manifested to Him his Universal Form.

The cardinal points, on which the three schools of Philosophy (Adwaita, Visishtadwaita and Dwaita) differ, are as to the nature of souls and their relation to God. The Adwaitins completely identify souls with God, Visishtadwaitins hold that souls are eternal entities quite distinct from, and subordinate to, God, but that all are equal in the enjoyment of bliss after salvation (Mukti); and Dwaitins while agreeing with the Visishtadwaitins as to the eternally separate existence of souls as distinct entities and their complete subordination to God are of opinion that the bliss enjoyed by the emancipated souls (Muktas) varies with the merit to the credit of each soul.

The highly flexible character of the Sanskrit language, the absence of definitions of the important words and expressions used in works of authority, and the

personal convictions and inclinations of the commentators, have naturally given scope for differences of opinion as to the meaning of the texts which specially speak of God and souls. These differences are not surprising, for we know by personal experience, that even in the interpretation of modern legislative enactments which, by means of definitions and illustrations, have done their best to secure unanimity in judicial decisions, eminent judges very often differ in the construction of statutes. The Bible and the Koran have given rise to differences of interpretation and to the formation of different religious sects such as the protestant, the Roman Catholic, the Greek Church, (to say nothing of the sub-divisions such as Calvinists, Free Church, High Church) among Christians; and Sunnies, Shiahs, and Wahabees among the Muham-madans.

The readers of Sree Madhwacharya's original Bhashyas (commentaries in Sanskrit) will find that, as a rule, he has quoted in support of his interpretation, authorities from the Vedas, Smritis, Puranas and Itihasas. Mr. Padmanabhacharyar has not reproduced them in the work before us, lest it should grow too voluminous; but this omission does not in the least affect the faithfulness with which he has followed the interpretation of Sree Madhwacharya. The readers may rest assured that, in Mr. Padmanabhacharyar's commentaries, they have the most accurate interpretation, of texts as given by Sree Madhwacharya. He is bringing out a Sanskrit commentary, in which the portions omitted in the English are given. Those who are acquainted with the Sanskrit language will find it very useful and interesting.

We shall give only instances of the manner in which Mr. Padmanabhacharyar has dealt with the texts. The forty-fifth and forty-sixth slokas in the second chapter of BHAGAVAD GEETA have raised much controversy, as their superficial reading seems to throw doubt on the authority of the Vedas. Mr Padmanabhacharyas elaborately considers the commentaries of the different schools and shows that the interpretation given by Sree Madhwacharya fully maintains the high authority of the Vedas. That the interpretations of Sri Madhwacharya is the right one is proved by the 22nd sloka of Chapter X of the BHAGAVAD GEETA in which Sree Krishna says, "I am Sama Veda among the Vedas". All that is meant by the two slokas in the second Chapter is that the Vedic rites must be performed without hankering for their promised rewards. This is consistent with the repeated injunctions of Sree Krishna to Arjuna never to undertake a duty for the temporal rewards it promises, lest the failure to secure the reward should discourage the resumption of duty. In Sloka 40 of Chapter VI we further find the assurance of Sree Krishna that no good act is ever spiritually lost.

In Conclusion, I wish to assure the talented and erudite commentator Mr. Padmanabhacharyar, that he has admirably done his duty as a scholar and commentator, in the spirit inculcated by the Greatest Teacher of the World, Sree Krishna, in the BHAGAVAD GEETA.

Triplicane
16th August, 1916

K. KRISHNASWAMI RAO.

A FEW WORDS BY THE AUTHOR

An association designated Sree Madhwa Tatwa Bubhutsu Sabha was doing good work for a time in Coimbatore. Under its auspices, weekly meetings used to be held for some years, for religious discourses. It chanced that I was called on to deliver lectures on BHAGAVAD GEETA and M.R. Ry. H. Rama Rao Avl. was requested to expound Yukti Mallika.

In trying to do justice to my work, I was forced to make something like a comparative study. This opened to my eyes a vista of interesting information. Day by day, the conviction grew upon me that Sree Madhwa's interpretations were preferable to those of others, based, since they invariably were, on sound texts of authority and vigorous common-sense. It occurred to me that the notes of weekly lectures might be put into shape and submitted to the public.

Unfortunately Oriental savants of the West mistook Vedantism to mean only Adwaita. They bestowed scant attention on the Theology of Sree Madhwa and hardly noticed it in their researches. When Theosophy came to publish the glories of Indian antiquity, it also threw Dualism into obscurity. In the advertisement given by the new methods to Non-dualism, Sree Madhwa's Theology went, for no fault of its own, into comparative neglect.

Week after week, as I worked my way through Sree Madhwa's Commentaries and compared them with those of other schools, the feeling became strong in my mind that this system deserved better of the public and that its languishment arose partly at least from want of presentment in accordance with modern methods. I therefore thought that no apology was necessary to give an English rendering to Sree Madhwa's Bhagavad Geeta. The only apology that was called for lies, however, in the circumstance that I, of all persons, should take up the role of being Sree Madhwa's interpreter.

Nobody is more conscious and convinced than I am of my incompetence for the task. But a strong hope that others more competent may, in due time, take up and continue this work on similar lines, is my chief excuse.

In studying various commentaries of dissenting schools, I came upon a Srirangam Edition of the BHAGAVAD GEETA with the Commentary of one Venkatanatha. This is a printed publication of 1912 A.D. This commentator has indulged in very strong language of abusive criticism against Sree Madhwa. I found the matter and manner of his criticism very unjust and ungenerous. In some places, he has descended to malignant bitterness. A perusal of this work confirmed me in the idea of doing something in vindication of Sree Madhwa.

This writer Venkatanatha was unknown before the Srirangam printers ushered him into public notice. When he lived and where, are not ascertainable.

Although his editor looks upon him with unbounded admiration and has nothing but unlimited praise to bestow on his work, I fail to see much of merit in him as an original thinker. In numerous places, he has simply copied Madhusoodana Saraswati.

The following are instances of his plagiarism:-

The asterisks are gross examples.

Nowhere does this writer think of acknowledging indebtedness.

Number of Chapter	Number of the verses.
II	... 26, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, 45*, 54, 55, 56*, 57*, 58, 63R, 64, 66, 67, 71.
III	... 6, 7, 10*, 17, 21, 22, 26, 28, 31R, 34, 40R
IV	... 3, 12R, 20, 22, 25, 27*, 29, 31, 41
V	... 3, 6*, 13, 15, 17*, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 28
VI	... 1, 2, 8, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22*, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 32, 35*, 37, 43*.

The following are the chief works consulted by me in my effort to make a comparative study:-

1. Sri Madhwa's Geeta Bhashya
2. Sri Jayateertha's Prameya Deepika thereof.
3. Sri Madhwa's Geeta Tatparya.
4. Sri Jayateertha's Nyaya Deepika thereof.
5. Sri Raghavendra Swami's Geeta Vivriti
6. Sankaracharya's Geeta Bhashya
7. Anandgiri's gloss on Sankara Bhashya
8. Works of

- a) Madhusoodana Saraswati
- b) Sankarananda.
- c) Neelakanta
- d) Sridhara
- e) Abhinava Guptacharya
- f) Sankara Bhashyotharsha Deepika
- g) Brahmanandagiri of vencatanatha

N.B. All these (No.8) are of the Adwaita school.

9. Ramanujacharya's Geeta Bhashya.

10. Vedanta Desikar's gloss thereof, known as Tatparya Chandrika.

I leave it to the reader to appraise the value of and the necessity for this work. No doubt, I have freely criticized wherever I thought criticism necessary. But I have never done so in malice. People may differ from me and feel unconvinced by my reasoning; but I pray that no motives be attributed to me. It is nothing but

the exigencies of frank discussion that have called for the language used and not a carping spirit of fault-finding.

The volume deals with the first six chapters of the BHAGAVAD GEETA. I have stopped at this point as my poor scholarship and poorer health would let me advance no further.

My thanks are primarily due to Sree Madhwa Tatwa Bubhutsu Sabha who created for me the opportunity to make a study. My thanks are due to M.R.Ry. Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Avl., C.I.E. for his foreword where he has spoken of me in very kindly terms. I am highly thankful to Mr. P. Hari Rao, B.A., B.L., High court Vakil, Madras for the general index attached to this work.

I tender thanks to my friends who assisted me in preparing the typed sheets and passing them through the press. The services of Mr. K. Srinivasa Rao, B.A., B.L., my son-in-law, were particularly helpful and valuable.



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CHAPTER IV

चतुर्थोऽध्यायः

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

- 1) इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥

श्रीभगवान्	...	The Lord
उवाच	...	said
इमं	...	This
विवस्वते	...	to Vivaswan (Sun)
योगं	...	Yoga
प्रोक्तवान्	...	taught
अहं	...	I

अव्ययं	...	imperishable
विवस्वान्	...	Vivaswan
मनवे	...	to Manu
प्राह	...	taught
मनुः	...	Manu
इक्ष्वाकवे	...	to Ikshvaku
अब्रवीत्	...	taught

“I gave this imperishable teaching of *yoga* to Vivaswan. He taught Manu, and Manu taught Ikshvaku”.

Verse 30, chapter III, calls on every *karmayogin* to surrender all actions unto God in devotion, and engage in work, free from greed and egotism. Verse 43 of chapter III ends by the statement that the only weapon for conquering काम with, is knowledge of God. Thus, God figures predominantly in every true religious life. The present chapter takes up this thread and dwells on God and his incarnations up to verse 15.

From verses 15 to 33, the religious observance of the *karmayogin* is distinguished from other kinds of work, and subdivisions are pointed out among the engagements and observances of the yogin.

From verse 33 to the end of the chapter, *gnana* is explained and extolled as of the greatest efficacy. None of these three topics can be said to be a digression or irrelevant.

Ramanujacharya thinks that the discourse about God is not strictly relevant but arises only incidentally. As this writer interpreted बुद्धेः परः in verses 42 & 43 of chapter III to mean not God, but greed (काम), he has failed to note the appropriateness of the Geeta verses treating of God in this connection.

In saying that the final portion of this chapter (IV) deals with *gnana*, Ramanujacharya thinks that the *gnana* referred to is just that which is a component factor of *karmayoga* and what is implied therein (आत्मज्ञान). It is difficult to see the value and importance of this limitation. No religious life, be it of the *karmayogin*, *gnanayogin*, or *bhakti-yogin*, is possible or conceivable without the knowledge of and devotion of God. This common basis of every yoga is obviously the *gnana* treated at the end of this chapter.

In verses 31 and 32 of chapter III, the Lord pointed out the blessing or the disaster in following His teaching or discarding it. 'This teaching of Mine' etc. said He. In chapter IV, further light is thrown on why and how the teaching is God's. Sri Krishna says "It was I that taught this identical subject, of old, to the first-born of men".

It is a merit of Dharma that it is ancient, that it emanated from sages, and that it was taught to and accepted by sages in theory and practice. A great teaching consists of wise lessons addressed by an eminent teacher to a qualified pupil for high ends. No greater Teacher than God is conceivable. The first-

born kings of the Earth were, of course, highly deserving pupils. No greater purpose could be at the bottom, than what *yoga* leads to. The anecdote of God teaching *yoga* to Vivaswan and others is to draw attention to the similarity of the situation in respect of the Geeta itself addressed to Arjuna by Sri Krishna. The Lord calls antiquity into requisition to convince His pupil that the philosophy taught is not to be deemed only a clever argument thought of at the spur of the moment for converting a downhearted soldier.

In verse 20 of chapter III, the example of Janaka was pointed out, and Arjuna was exhorted to imitate it. That was an instance of a house-holder-king who achieved salvation without ever adopting the ascetic's life of renunciation. The present anecdote of *yoga* taught to Vivaswan is meant to accentuate the point that whatever the caste and whatever the Order, it is open to all to work out their salvation through a life of devotional activity.

There has been difference of view over the meaning of इमं योगं – “This *yoga*”. The doubt is whether it means *karmayoga* or *gnanayoga* or both. The school of Sankaracharya ever partial to *gnanayoga* and strongly biassed in favour of *Sanyasa*, prefers to see the antecedent of “This” to be *Gnanayoga*. Sankaracharya thinks so and is said to hold further that worldly occupations mean *karmayoga*, while *gnanayoga* is renunciation. This last notion seems wrong. Worldly avocations in which God and religion have no art or part, may have their value, but are no *yoga* or *karmayoga* as understood in the Geeta.

A good part of chapter II and nearly the whole of chapter III deals with *karmayoga*. This being so, why should the pronoun *इमं* in the verse under comment, relate to Sankhya alone of chapter II and put the other entirely out of account.

Neelakanta sees this difficulty, and, after quoting Sankara Bhashya, ventures to differ from his master. He says that the yoga of action forms the proper antecedent, and Sankhya, if contemplated at all, comes in incidentally. His view, further, is that, as Vivaswan and the kings who followed were Kshatriyas and were persons not qualified for Gnanayoga, Karmayoga was taught to them. This last observation is not sound. There is nothing to show that the said kings were not sages, nor that they were under any disability. It is funny that writers like Neelakanta speak of *karmayoga* with a tone of contempt and with apologies for praising or practising it. Such an attitude seems radically wrong.

The text says 'This yoga *imperishable*.' It is imperishable because its reward is such. It is so because also it rests on imperishable vedas for authority. The epithet is justified also by the circumstance that the yoga teaching is, in fact, not traceable to any beginning in time, for manwantaras are beginningless and the teachings are likewise.

The word *विवस्वान्*, no doubt, denotes a particular person who was the father of Manu, Sradha Deva. But this does not mean that the Manus before and

after had not the same benefit as he. As the present time is in this particular Manwantara, Sri Krishna refers pointedly to it by that name.

Manwantaras are fearfully long periods of time. 71 Mahayugas make up a Manwantara. A Mahayuga is composed of 4 *yugas* put together and each *yuga* comprises millions of years. Fourteen Manus are mentioned who are severally progenitors of the human race at various times. Their names are :—

1. Swayambhuva,
2. Swarochisha,
3. Uttama,
4. Tamasa,
5. Raivata,
6. Chakshusha,
7. Sradha Deva,
8. Savarni,
9. Daksha Savarni,
10. Brahma Savarni,
11. Dharma Savarni,
12. Rudra Savarni,
13. Veda Savarni,
14. Indra Savarni.

God guides every one of these in his time.

Vivaswan in the text not only stands for all these progenitors, but also to Divinities whom God always guides by the light of knowledge and wisdom. A long quotation from Brahma Vaivarta Purana (See Sanskrit Exposition) describes the Revelation of holy

teachings from Brahma downwards and traces it down to the Pandavas. It also refers to the Bhagavad Geeta taught to Arjuna as the quintessence of Pancharatra and unexcelled for loftiness and purity of thought.

2) एवं परंपराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परंतप ॥

एवं	...	thus
परंपराप्राप्तं	...	Handed down to successive descendants
इमं	...	this Dharma
राजर्षयः	...	Royal Rishis
विदुः	...	knew
सः	...	It
कालेन, इह	...	by this time
महता	...	long
योगः	...	yoga
नष्टः	...	was lost
परंतप	...	O! Arjuna

“ Handed down thus to successive descendants, this Dharma was known to Royal Rishis. That yoga became lost, O ! Arjuna, in the course of long ages”.

Revelations become dim and obscure in the course of ages. Their pristine purity is lost. Sceptics doubt

their authority. Memory fades and pupils receive but faint impressions. The line of eminent teachers is broken and the custodians of the treasure become few and far between. Hence, God has to incarnate again and again for the guidance of the world.

A story is told in the Puranas that Rishi Gautama once hurled a curse which extinguished the learning of a large body of Rishis. It would appear that a great famine had led a large number of Rishis to take refuge in the Asrama of Gautama which happened to be a blooming oasis in the midst of parched-up wastes by reason of Gautama's great penance.

The guests had a happy time of it and passed through the crisis. When the famine disappeared, wishing to go back home, they sought permission of Gautama, who, however, evaded the request, unable to endure the parting. The Rishis, prompted by Ganesha and Parvati, conspired together and created a cow by magic and let it graze in the heap of paddy strewed on the premises for drying. Gautama scared it gently with a stick, and, to his consternation, the cow fell dead. The Rishis at once left the hermitage saying it was an unworthy place to stay in. Gautama penanced long and severely and brought down the Godavari to revive the cow and get cleansed of sin.

Thinking it over, he found out the trick played by the Rishis and hurled at them a curse that their learning should be lost.

Thus, by efflux of ages and by other causes, too, such as this curse, learning became dim and obscure.

The Rajarshis referred to in the verse, are great kings who ruled the Earth and also possessed occult learning. Nimi, Nabhaga and many others, are mentioned in Puranas and Itihasas. The word may also mean two sets of people, Kings and Rishis. Janaka, and Aswapati are instances of such kings ; the Rishis are Sanaka and others. The word Rishi means learned. Rajarshi may simply mean a learned kings.

Seven classes of Rishis are set out in Ratna Kosha.
1. Brahmarshi, 2. Devarshi, 3. Maharshi, 4. Paramarshi, 5. Kandarshi, 6. Srutarshi and, 7. Rajarshi.

In Matsya (मत्स्य) Purana, 10 Rishis, Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulaka Kratu, Manu, Daksha, Vasishta, and Pulastya, are named as Maharshis, being born of Brahma's Manas. Thus, Rajarshi seems to be the name of a class of Rishis, the last of the seven groups named above. So the preferable meaning of the word in the Geeta verse seems to be that it denotes those kings who by virtue of their learning came under this designation by combining royalty with Divine wisdom.

3) स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥

सः	...	that
एव	...	itself

अयं	...	this
मया	...	by Me
ते	...	to you
अद्य	...	now
योगः	...	Yoga
प्रोक्तः	...	taught
पुरातनः	...	ancient
भक्तः	...	Bhakta (devoted)
असि	...	you are
मे	...	my
सखा	...	friend
च	...	and
इति	...	as
रहस्यं	...	secret
हि	...	verily
एतत्	...	this
उत्तमं	...	great

“ I have taught you now that ancient yoga and no other ; because you are My Bhakta and friend. This indeed is a great secret”.

Sri Krishna lays stress on the value and importance of the secret doctrine. That is due partly to its antiquity and partly to other causes. It is evidenced by the identity of this yoga, in essential features, with the old teachings. It is borne out by

the identity and greatness of the Teacher in both cases. That it is a great secret is shown by the circumstance that Arjuna would not have been taught, had he not been a Bhakta and friend of the Lord. It is called a great secret lest Arjuna should treat it lightly and fail to practise it.

It this connection, it may be remembered that our ancients did not believe in pearls being cast before swine. Every one has his aptitude and qualification. There is no object or utility in addressing teachings to the unworthy. At the end of the Geeta, the Lord says,

“Never is this to be taught by you to any one who is not penitent or who is without devotion ; nor to one who desires not to hear, nor to him who thinks ill of Me”.

Sankaracharya appears, from the manner he speaks of Vishnu in Sariraka Bhashya and Geeta Bhashya, to have been a devoted Vaishnava. But recent followers of his exhibit marked leanings in favour of Siva. Sankarananda observes in his commentary of this verse as to the expression “मे भक्तः My Bhakta”, that Arjuna was called Sri Krishna’s Bhakta because he was a true Bhakta of Siva and Siva was no other than Vishnu. This explanation is tortuous and involved, to say the least. What is there to show that Arjuna was no Bhakta of Sri Krishna, but only of Siva. Why should we go so far as to prove the identity of Siva and Vishnu in order to understand the appropriateness of calling Arjuna a Bhakta of Sri Krishna.

Nor is the identity referred to, borne out by the Shastras. This is a large question which it is not possible to discuss here. In the first line, it is said, "I have taught *you* this ancient yoga." Sankarananda lays stress on "you" here, and takes occasion to have a fling at Arjuna. In his opinion, "you", implies that Arjuna had been very stupid and ignorant, having mistaken the Atman for an *actor* and *enjoyer*. The Lord chooses to call Arjuna His friend and Bhakta. His commentators, however, are less generous and do not hesitate to use language of disparagement in speaking of him (Arjuna).

अर्जुन उवाच—

4) अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।

कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥

अर्जुनः	...	Arjuna
उवाच	...	said
अपरं	...	recent
भवतः	...	your
जन्म	...	birth
परं	...	old
जन्म	...	is the birth
विवस्वतः	...	of Vivaswan
कथं	...	how

एतत्	...	this
विजानीयां	...	can I take it
त्वं	...	you
आदौ	...	in the beginning
प्रोक्तवान्	...	taught
इति	...	thus

“Arjuna said,

‘Your birth is recent. The birth of Vivaswan is ancient. How can I take it that you taught in the beginning?’”

This question of Arjuna is, superficially speaking, easy and intelligible. Sri Krishna and Arjuna were more or less of the same age. He was born in Vasudeva’s house. Vivaswan is the Sun-god whose time was in the distant past, millions of years ago, according to the computation of *Yugas*. Hence, the statement that Sri Krishna taught Vivaswan calls for explanation.

But Arjuna knew better than to ask such a question. He had been told that God and Jeeva were eternal. He knew that bodies are assumed and cast away. He could easily have answered the doubt for himself that a past avatar of Sri Krishna must have taught Vivaswan.

It is to be remembered that the Geeta, although primarily addressed to Arjuna, is also meant for the benefit of all earnest religious and philosophical

enquirers. It, therefore, tackles many a question of interest which, Arjuna, strictly speaking, might have few doubts upon. Arjuna was a *born Aparoksha Gnanin*. But men who are no sages might conceivably have doubts. Many a religious system of the world believes not, for example, in Divine incarnations.

The Hindu and the Christian are almost unique in this belief. Except Hinduism, no other religion seems to have vigorously promulgated metempsychosis as a creed. So, rebirth may fairly be a point of perplexing doubt. Then again, recollection of past births is also a point that has perplexed thinkers and philosophers. Even if Sri Krishna taught of old, how could he remember ? On the footing of these doubts, both possible and probable in respect to ordinary men, Arjuna puts a question in order to elicit a reply from the Lord's own mouth. If the Lord spoke out clearly and distinctly, and announced Himself, it would largely dispel wavering faiths and confirm belief. It would carry more weight with the sceptic world than if a lesser teacher or prophet spoke on the subject.

Moreover, Arjuna's native wisdom had been dimmed by human food and environments. His queries would, therefore, be right from this standpoint also.

In Agneya, there is a passage which says "Sages do put questions in order to obtain more light or only to disseminate truths. So, do you, O ! Partha." It is not unusual to find dialogues between sages in which simple doubts are addressed and answered.

The words अपरं and परं in the text have been translated into 'recent' and 'ancient'. The disparity in time is the point of the question. Madhusoodana construes the said words to denote also inferiority and superiority. According to him, Vivaswan, being a Deva, is higher than Sri Krishna, a mere man. This seems wrong. The verse says, "How can I take it that you taught in the beginning?" (आदौ) = "In the beginning" lays stress on the anachronism. In Sri Krishna's reply, verse 7 says, "whenever righteousness declines, I appear." Verse 8 speaks of Divine Avatars yuga after yuga. The Lord thus answered the doubt relating to time pointedly, and says not a word about the supposed difficulty based on Vivaswan being a Deva and Sri Krishna being but a man.

We may, again, examine a little more what it was that Arjuna wished to know. As stated already, he knew the possibility of past Avatars.

In chapter III, verse 30 says "Surrender all actions unto Me." This is the essence of Yoga. The injunction is to believe in and worship God. The worshipper is thus obviously a lower being. Worship implies pre-eminence in the Being worshipped. Hence, Divine greatness came to be strictly relevant. Arjuna seeks further light on it.

The purport of a question is often deducible from the reply given thereto. In the reply, Sri Krishna speaks of His manifold births, of His omniscience, of His Avatars exhibited at will whenever the best interests of Dharma call for Him, and when He is wanted for

protecting the good and punishing the wicked. From these replies, we may judge that Arjuna sought light on all these points by the comprehensive word कथं meaning 'why', 'how,' and 'wherefore'. He virtually asked the Master, "Sir, did you take any Form? You evidently taught not only Vivaswan but the Gods also. If so, did you do it in a single Avatar or many. Do you remember the incidents of previous Avatars. Are you subject to the laws of *karma*, for, birth means the compulsion of *karma* towards embodiment. Is there any time or occasion when your Avatar may be expected as a rule? What indeed is the purpose for which you manifest yourself as an Avatar ?" As already said, these doubts were dealt with *seriatim* by the answers given.

Ramanujacharya and many other commentators take it that Arjuna knew and believed in the Divinity of Sri Krishna, and explain the question in some manner consistent with this position. For, one who might believe in Sri Krishna's God-head may still ask Him on many points of detail for authoritative information.

Critic Venkatanath directs a strong attack against Ramanujacharya's note on this verse. Ramanujacharya says (1) that Arjuna knew of Sri Krishna being God ; and (2) that Arjuna wished to know principally whether Divine Avatars were facts or fiction ; in other words, whether they were real objects or illusory phenomena like the mango of black magic.

Venkatanath criticizes these two points. In his view, Arjuna came to know of Sri Krishna's Divinity only after the latter showed him the Universal Form that staggered him, in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Geeta. Till then, Arjuna had simply taken Sri Krishna for a great man, and no more. On the second point, the critic says that the language of the text – neither the one in which the question is put nor the one in which the reply is given – says anything about the reality or unreality of any Avatars. Moreover, he says, as a matter of fact, Avatars cannot be real and true. In fact, they are akin to the magician's mango. If Avataric births were true, the eternality of Sri Krishna must be false. In chapter II, many a verse spoke of Atman being unborn and immortal. Those teachings, it would follow, must be all untrue and unsound. Hence, Venkatanath concludes that the verity of Avatars, which Ramanujacharya seeks to establish by the Lord's reply, is a myth.

In this criticism which is couched in rather strong language, one fails to see much force. Times without number, Sri Krishna declared His Divinity even before the XIth chapter. In the previous Parvas, on many an occasion, Vyasa, Bheeshma and others, had taught the Pandavas about Sri Krishna. Why should Ramanujacharya be thought wrong in saying that Arjuna did know Sri Krishna to be God. The laboured argument relating to the XIth chapter crumbles like a pack of cards at a touch. It is so queer in its originality that no other commentator of the same or other schools has cared to mention it or adopt it.

It is so gratifying to a Monist's heart to call things unreal. It is said that Avatars are unreal ; but why? Because, it is said, Sri Krishna being eternal, a true Avataric birth would militate against such a proposition. This argument is based on the vital fallacy that what is true must be eternal and what is not eternal must be unreal. This, of course, is a plank of the Monist's cult. But other schools do not agree in it. The objects of the world, the chair, the table, the pot and so on, are real and true, although they are not eternal. Human bodies are born and also die, still they are real. So also, Avatars may have an origin and an end in time, still they may be true.

The proposition that *Atman* is eternal has nothing to do with material forms being ephemeral. How such a confusion is possible, is to me incomprehensible.

In the case of God, His Avataric Forms are, in fact, eternal too. They are not material. They appear and disappear at His will. Becoming visible is their only birth. Invisibility is their only death. Hence, the mere use of the words birth and death need not have so ruffled or alarmed Venkatanath.

Even in the case of man, his birth and death mean only the assumption or abandonment of a body. This, as already pointed out, does not affect the eternality of the soul.

In this criticism of Venkatanath, the only observation that carries some weight is where he says that the reality or unreality of Avatars is not trace-

able to the language either of the question or of the reply in the text. Arjuna drew attention to the anachronism, and the reply answered it. To this, the question of Avatars being *fact* or *fiction* may be deemed alien. In other respects, Venkatanath's attack is unjust being intemperate in tone and unsound in logic.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

5) बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप ॥

बहूनि	...	Many
मे	...	my
व्यतीतानि	...	past
जन्मानि	...	births
तव	...	yours
च	...	and
अर्जुन	...	O ! Arjuna
तानि	...	them
अहं	...	I
वेद	...	know
सर्वाणि	...	all
न	...	not
त्वं	...	you

वेत्थ	...	know
परंतप	...	O ! Vanquisher of foes

The Lord said,

“Many are my past births and yours, too, O! Arjuna. I know them all, but you do not know them, O! Parantapa.”

The verse answers the anachronism urged. The Lord says that His previous incarnations were many. By ‘many,’ he means innumerable.

This statement is not the sole object of the lesson; ; for, Arjuna could have made out the same for himself by means of teachings already given him in chapter II and elsewhere. But Sri Krishna proceeds to say that Arjuna’s births have been innumerable too, and adds quickly that He himself knew all of them, while Arjuna was ignorant. The chief predication lies in the contrast drawn between Arjuna and Sri Krishna to the effect, that, whereas the former was ignorant, the latter was omniscient. With reference to the proposition that, in Karmayoga, the devotee should surrender all actions unto God, Divine greatness required to be revealed and explained more than had been done. The incarnations of God called for special exposition in order that worship might be based on an appreciation of God’s greatness.

Attention is drawn to the fact that Divine incarnations are numberless. We understood the word विवस्वान् to stand not alone for the Sun but for all

Devas. God guides them all by His numberless Forms and Revelations. In one place in Santi Parva, it is said "Vishnu handed to Mareechi the *Sword of Dharma*. The Rishis transmitted it to Manu to rule the world with. Manu handed it down to Kshupa and from him, Ikshwaku got it. He in his turn transmitted it to Pururavas." Chapters 166 & 163.

The point is that Vishnu is described as the Universal philosopher, guide and upholder, and His forms are necessarily countless.

It may be thought, at first sight, that there was no occasion for referring to Arjuna's past births, because the question related only to the doubt how Sri Krishna could have taught Vivaswan. But in depicting the contrast between Himself and Arjuna, it was perfectly appropriate to point out one chief point of resemblance. Sri Krishna says virtually "We are, no doubt, similar in this respect by both of us having a history of countless births behind us, but the similarity ends there, for *I* do know them all and *you* do not."

The word तव 'yours' stands not only for Arjuna but for all Jeevas. The greatness of Sri Krishna that is brought out is meant to be not only in relation to Arjuna but to the entire Universe of Souls.

It is also easy to understand the word व्यतीतानि to mean more than is on the surface. It means primarily 'past or previous', denoting the march of

time. But it also means pre-eminence. "My births innumerable are pre-eminently above those of others. The pre-eminence consists in the Divine Forms being eternal, non-material, subtle, made of truth, intelligence and bliss, out and out. They are pre-eminent in covering universal space and what is inconceivably beyond. They are supreme by comprising infinite attributes of excellence." This epithet व्यतीतानि prepares us for the proposition in the second line that He alone is omniscient.

Madhusoodana says, त्व 'yours' stands for all Jeevas, because all Jeevas are *one and the same*. This is Monism with a vengeance. For, Sri Krishna is, for that matter, identical with all Jeevas and it is difficult to see why He should speak of himself as distinct from Arjuna and others.

Ramanujacharya thinks that the reference to Arjuna's previous births is only by way of illustration. According to him, the meaning is 'Just as your births are many, so are mine? If Arjuna could not understand the possibility of Divine incarnations, the illustration given could hardly be more illuminative to him. However, there is no serious objection to this view.

Another point insisted on by Ramanujacharya is, that the verse under comment is meant to teach us that Divine incarnations are not fanciful. Venkatanath's criticism of this has been set out under the last verse. The objection, briefly stated, is that

the language of the text allows no room for it. There is no word or words to show that Divine incarnations were suspected to be unreal and that such a doubt called for solution. No doubt, every cognition implies reality at the bottom. When we talk of a pot, or see it or feel it, the experience cognizes its reality by implication. We recognize it as a true thing unless the cognition is contradicted by other conflicting experiences and sayings. But this basic principle has nothing to do with the question whether the context under notice deals or not expressly with the reality or otherwise of incarnations.

In the second line, Sri Krishna says, 'I know them all'. The word अहं has been interpreted in *Isavasyopanishad* as a name of God meaning that He is immutably perfect. In the text, it may usually convey this sense particularly ; for the verb वेद in the First Person Singular virtually makes अहं, in the sense of 'I', superfluous. In this event, the immutable perfection of God furnishes a reason for the statement that He is all-knowing.

We read, in Hindu books, of great men remembering previous births. When Jada Bharata roamed in the forest as a deer, he is said to have recollected who he had been before and what he had done to entail the penalty he suffered. When King Nahusha lay in the jungle as a huge boa-constrictor and seized Bheema to devour him, we are told that he had a similar recollection. The quickened child of the womb is said to remember its past on the eve of being shunted

out of the womb (*Vide* a pathetic passage in Bhagavata III – 32 – 10).

Thus, as Jeevas, too, do recollect in some cases, Sri Krishna adds the saving clause "*I do know them all*". In this, there are three points of note. (1) He knows *them*. '*Them*' stands for the incarnations of God, and those of Arjuna as well as of every Being in the Universe. No Yogin knows of incarnations other than his own. (2) He knows them *all*. We note the universality or totality of the knowledge. No Yogin recollects *all* his previous births. (3) He *knows* them all, that is, as direct perceptive experience. There is a distinction between perception and memory. The latter is weaker than the former and is indirect. What we perceive lies stored in the mind as impressions until some cause or other calls it up for recollection. But in respect to God, all His ideas are direct, perceptive experience, and there is no occasion for the play of memory or for recollections. The text uses वेद to denote *this*, that Sri Krishna knew all his incarnations not as faded memories but as direct perceptions.

The reader may note that there are two words, (1) Arjuna and (2) Parantapa, used vocatively in the verse. Some commentators attribute special significance to them and the result is fanciful and queer. Madhusoodana thinks that 'Arjuna' implies that our hero is dull and stupid like the tree of that Sanskrit name, — being wrapped in dense ignorance. He construes Parantapa to mean that Arjuna was a very deluded man indeed, in that he created enemies

through Dualistic notions, and fought them, whereas if he knew the truth, duality was a myth and he had really no enemies to fight or vanquish.

I am constrained to remark that the interpretation of Madhusoodana is, indeed, very far-fetched and fanciful here. 'Parantapa' literally means 'Vanquisher of foes'. Whence does it follow that the foes he kills are imaginary beings created by the fantasy of Arjuna ? Where is the room for suddenly slipping Monism into an innocent word of compliment addressed to a warrior ?

Sankaracharya thinks that the difference between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, in that the former is all-knowing and the latter is ignorant, is accounted for by the fact that Arjuna's vision is dimmed by Dharma and Adharma, while that of the other is not. This explanation is elaborated by his commentator in Utkarsha Deepika. This writer observes thus : 'Arjuna' means (*Vide* one of the lexicon meanings) 'pure and white'. It shows that he is dominated by Dharma. Parantapa means 'Hot for enemies'. He make even God's position hot, by his unrighteousness. Hence, these two words indicate the influence of good and evil over Arjuna".

Here again, we see that all sorts of ideas have been forced into these two simple words. It is hard to see why Dharma should dim the intellect of any one, nor why it should act as an impediment of *truth*. The idea of Arjuna ruffling God by his wickedness is also very singular.

As against these fanciful interpretations, it is somewhat refreshing to turn to Venkatanath who also feels bound to read a special significance in the word 'Arjuna'. According to him, Sri Krishna compliments and consoles Arjuna, and addresses him by that name to show that he is not an ignorant person, after all, like ordinary men, but that he is a high-souled being of superior parts, talents and learning, though not possessed of the very highest wisdom. This observation is note-worthy, rather than that of Madhusoodana who compares our hero to a block of wood.

In Virata Parva, Arjuna explains to the Prince Uttara the denotation of his own name, "In the world, my colour is unique. I am known as Arjuna, because my deeds are pure".

“पृथिव्यां चतुरन्तायां वर्णो मे दुर्लभस्समः ।
करोमि कर्म शुद्धं च तेन मामर्जुनं विदुः ॥”

I venture, however, to think that ingenuity need not be wasted in trying to dive deep into the meanings of vocative expressions freely used by Sri Krishna and Arjuna towards each other, nor need fantastic results be evolved therefrom.

6) अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥

अजः	...	birthless
अपि	...	also
सन्	...	although I am
अव्ययात्मा	...	of deathless body
भूतानां	...	of created Beings
ईश्वरः	...	the Lord
अपि	...	even
सन्	...	although I am
प्रकृतिं	...	Prakriti
स्वां	...	My
अधिष्ठाय	...	taking stand on
संभवामि	...	I disclose myself
आत्ममायया	...	out of my own will

“Although I am also unborn and undying (even as to body), and though I am the Lord of created beings, yet I appear before the world out of My own will, taking stand on My Prakriti”.

Chapter II, verse 17 and other verses too, told us of God's birthless and deathless essence. He is above every Jeeva, because, He is not subject to any kind of imperfection. Things, in general, are subject to 4 kinds of change. They are (1) destruction, (2) loss of outer body, (3) affection by grief and (4) other kinds of imperfection. Although Jeevas do not suffer destruction, they are liable to the other three disabilities. God suffers from none of them. From this, it is

clear that God is eternal in respect to His bodily and spiritual essence.

Now the last verse (No. 5, chapter IV) said that births innumerable of Sri Krishna had gone by. This evidently conflicts with the saying that the births of God are ephemeral and transient in no sense whatever.

The Lord proceeds to explain the nature and character of His incarnation, and states how He is truly unborn and undying in the most comprehensive sense. In the first line of the text, he re-affirms the eternality already taught and, in the second line, reconciles the Avataric appearances therewith.

There are three predicates in the first line': (1) I am unborn, (2) I am undying, and (3) I am ruler of all. Every one of these denotes a conflict with Sri Krishna being born (संभवामि of the 2nd line). To be Ruler of all is not consistent with birth and loss of body every now and then. The Supreme God is not merely a Ruler in the sense that every Deity rules, or kings rule—for these may rule for a time and die—but He is Ruler in a Supreme sense. He could not afford to be born or to die. अज And अव्यय denote a plain verbal contradiction with संभवामि.

. In this connection, it is to be noted that the objection of Arjuna and the reply thereto must be understood as relating to the body or bodies of Sri Krishna as well as to His soul. For, every Jeeva is

eternal in respect to his soul. Arjuna had been taught, threadbare, of the soul's eternity. He could hardly have mistaken व्यतीतानि to mean that Sri Krishna's atman had been born and dead many a time. The point of the question is "you are great; you taught Vivaswan.

If your bodies be transient, there is no such bodily unity in you as to distinguish you from mortals like us, and there is no probability that it is *you yourself* that taught Vivaswan." The reply takes note of the main point and purport of the question, and insists on Sri Krishna's body being also eternal. The contrast between Jeevas and God is one of the chief lessons of the theme. In drawing the contrast, *our* transient bodies are set off against *His* birthless and immortal incarnations.

The word अव्ययात्मा calls for a passing notice. It would have sufficed to have used the word अव्यय alone like अज.

The use of आत्मा which means 'body' is significant and helps us with a clue by pointing out that the eternity affirmed relates to the Avataric bodies of God. In this, Neelakanta concurs.

But Sankaracharya does not seem to admit this *Avataric* eternity. A great deal of confusion is also evident among the members of his school as to God's incarnate bodies, whether they are real in any sense. Of this, however, later on.

After drawing attention, prominently, to the conflict between God's absolute eternality and His Avataric Births, Sri Krishna proceeds in the second line of the text to reconcile the apparent contradiction. He says that He uses the ever-obedient Prakriti of His, and produces Himself out of His own free will. In other words, an Avatar is only a manifestation, the unseen becoming seen. In becoming visible, God uses the adventitious agency of Prakriti.

Vasudeva and Devaki are some of the materials He uses. He appears, first, in their bodies and their house, just as the sun and moon appear in the East. There is no more of material contact or relation than that. This is one way He takes stand on Prakriti. Another is that He uses Prakriti and Tamoguna to induce belief that He is actually born like mortals. Durga is one of the three forms of Lakshmi, and Prakriti in Durga Form is used by Him, to delude the world about His *birth* and *mortality*. Lest the objector should say, the Prakriti serves as the human veil also, the text adds the qualification that Prakriti is *His own* – an ever-obedient, ever-willing slave of His, which He orders about, never being mixed up, inextricably with it as we mortals are. Moreover, we are slaves of Karma and many other compelling forces that chain us to Prakriti. But God is above all and nothing compels Him. The same idea as to His absolute freedom is denoted by the expression आत्ममायया = 'By My own will'. It is His pleasure that He incarnates when and where He wills.

Apart from the word Prakriti denoting (1) matter and (2) Tamoguna and Durga, there is a third sense quite suited to the context – the one adopted by Ramanujacharya also, *viz.*, that it means the Divine nature स्वभाव. It is His nature to incarnate just as He does other work as God. He creates, maintains, and destroys the universe, because it is His स्वभाव. None compels Him and He does it for no end. He does it spontaneously as a mad man sings in pure exhilaration. Resting on his own spontaneous nature and out of His own choice and will, He makes Himself visible.

In the verse, the school of Sankaracharya is delighted with their favourite word माया. They take it in their own sense of delusory something and build their theory about the Incarnate form.

Venkatanatha strongly objects to Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhwa rendering माया to mean “God’s wish or will.” This, he says, is an unknown meaning and he adds that there is no reason to reject the well-known meaning which Advaitins adopt. If the critic means that माया does not माया bear the meaning of “knowledge, thought, wish or will,” he is grossly mistaken. Sri Madhwa quotes the lexicon that माया is one of the names for प्रज्ञा (knowledge etc.). Desikar also quotes the Vedic lexicon to the same effect. Anandagiri (a commentator of Sankara Bhashya) expressly admits this. (“प्रज्ञानामसुपाठात्” says he) and

Sridhara renders माया into 'wish'. Thus, the criticism of Venkatanath in this respect is not sound or well-founded. Venkatanath says besides, that, unless माया means *delusion*, the conflict between Divine *eternality* and Divine *birth* is not set at rest. His idea is that the former is real and the latter is unreal, and hence there is no conflict. But surely, the conflict could be reconciled on the lines of the explanation already given. The Divine essence and forms are all eternal, but the Forms become visible when He pleases. There is no need for the Incarnate forms to be unreal or fanciful. Why and how the Avatars come and go is a matter of His inscrutable pleasure.

With regard to the body of Sri Krishna and other incarnations, Sri Madhwa holds that they are not only eternal but are also of non – material essence. God is an Infinity of excellences – of everything great and good. He is Existence, Intelligence and Bliss (सत्, चित्, आनन्द); his Avataric bodies are absolutely of the same compositions as, and identical with, the original essence out and out.

Among the commentators of the Sankara School, there seems to be divergence of opinion on this particular point.

Sankaracharya's view is that the Incarnate Form of God is made of extremely subtle *material* stuff, that it is of शुद्धसत्त्व and कारणोपाधि. God calls 'matter' in the causal state into requisition, and creates Avataric

bodies out of that stuff. It is so subtle and so transparent that it does not obstruct His omniscience. Hence God continues all - knowing. He does not adopt Avatars because of any bondage-compelling Karma.

To this exposition, Sankaracharya adds the rider that the Avataric forms are *"not real as in the case of beings in the world"*. His commentator explains it saying that Avatars are fanciful (प्रातिभासिक). An instance of merely fanciful reality is, according to their system, furnished by 'the silver in the mother-of-pearl' or 'the snake - in - the - rope.' Thus, it follows that incarnations are not true and Divine Forms are मायिक Mayic in composition.

The reader may see that the rider of Sankara Bhashya that 'Divine bodies are not real as those of beings in the world are' is unintelligible, because he and his school hold human bodies too, to be unreal. The whole world being unreal, it is hard to see how, according to Monism, Divine Forms are more unreal, so to say, than human bodies. Commentator Anandagiri attempts an explanation and suggests that, whereas men believe their bodies to be real and are attached to them, God does not believe this and is not affected by attachment (अभिमान). But the explanation is beside the point. The question of Divine beliefs and human beliefs has nothing to do with the discussion as to what the Avataric Form is composed of and whether it is real or unreal.

Other members of the Monistic school (*Vide* Madhusoodana and Neelakanta in particular) think that Avataric Forms are not material at all. This seems to be an important divergence. They hold that God takes no Bodies at all, that He is ever spiritual and invisible and that our delusive ignorance alone is accountable for the phantasms of Incarnate Forms that we see. On some minor points even in this matter, Madhusoodana and Neelakanta seem to differ. But it is not possible to discuss those details here.

The broad point is that, whereas Sankaracharya holds Incarnate Forms to be material in composition, the others differ from him and set down Avatars to be of Brahman's *spiritual* stuff. Utkarsha Deepika, who stands valiantly by Sankaracharya's views, attacks Madhusoodana and Neelakanta for daring to differ from the common teacher. His note is very long.

It seems to me that, as all these writers are unanimous in setting down Incarnate Forms to be *unreal apparitions*, the discussion whether the Forms are of material or spiritual stuff is pointless.

To the followers of Sri Madhwa and Ramanujacharya, the internal divergence among the members of the Advaitic School is not without significance. It is obviously felt by recent expounders of Monism that God is depreciated by the tenet that His Avatars are of material composition. Hence, they have been grafting on the old stock their own new ideas, borrowed, evidently, from the works of

Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhwa ; but Utkarsha Deepika as a conservative advocate of Sankara Bhashya stoutly resists the innovation.

The view adopted by Sankaracharya, Madhusoodana and Neelakanta, have been discussed at some length in the Sanskrit exposition along with the criticisms of Utkarsha Deepika. The reader is referred there to for further information, if required.

To sum up, Sri Madhwa holds that Divine Avatars are real in the truest and most comprehensive sense, that they are absolutely eternal, that they are non-material and identical in essence and composition with God Himself in every respect, and that God chooses to exhibit them to, or veil them off from, human vision, at His own sweet will and pleasure.

7) यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

8) परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

यदा, यदा, हि ...	Whenever, indeed
धर्मस्य ...	of Dharma
ग्लानिः ...	languishment

भवति	...	occurs
भारत	...	O! Arjuna
अभ्युत्थानं	...	ascendancy
अधर्मस्य	...	of Adharma – evil
तदा	...	Then
आत्मानं	...	Myself
सृजामि	...	create
अहं	...	I
परित्राणाय	...	For the protection
साधूनां	...	of the good
विनाशाय	...	for the destruction
च	...	and
दुष्कृतां	...	of the wicked
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय ...		for the purpose of establishing Dharma
संभवामि	...	I incarnate
युगे युगे	...	In yuga after yuga.

“Whenever languishment occurs of Dharma and the ascendancy of Adharma, O! Arjuna, then I create Myself.”

“For the protection of the good, and the destruction of the wicked, and for the purpose of establishing Dharma, I incarnate in yuga after yuga.”

These two verses state when, and for what purpose, God incarnates. If the time calls for Divine Incarnation, He appears. When good declines and evil

dominates, the time calls for Him. If good people suffer and bad men tyrannize, He comes to protect the former and put down the latter. Restoration of *Dharma* is one of His *chief* purposes.

God does not wait till Dharma has absolutely disappeared. He turns up even when it languishes.
(ग्लानिः)

Similarly, He is ready even when He sees evil gaining the upper hand, and before it has completely established a mastery (अभ्युत्थानं).

धर्म is an elastic expression. It stands for righteousness, religion, piety, duty and whatever else upholds order and progress.

धर्म Denotes God also, as He is the Universal Upholder. When devotion disappears from human minds, He turns up to rekindle the light.

धर्म Denotes Vedas. It is the name of the Upanishadas. When Revelations fail to teach and instruct, God comes in our midst to resuscitate them. In the Mahabharata, Santi Parva, there is a vivid description of Hayagreeva Incarnation as an Equine figure whose head is the Vedas and whose limbs are parts of the Universe.

The expression यदायदा denotes that God does not wait for any special time or term. He promises to

incarnate whenever there is need. युगेयुगे too must be similarly understood. It does not mean every one of the *yugas* technically so called.

The text says, then "I create myself". 'Create' is used in the sense of 'manifest', and denotes that God becomes visible to men. That Form is of the same Divine composition as God Himself, does not differ from God in any respect, and is endowed with every attribute of His, including eternality.

In Ramanajucharya's system, Avataric Forms are evidently not absolutely identical with the Original Essence. He seems to hold them transient and mortal. Vedanta Desikar, therefore, has a note on this clause 'आत्मानं सृजामि' and points out that if आत्मानं mean God Himself, 'One creating Oneself' is illogical, and that the word, therefore, denotes the Incarnated Form *which is not eternal and which is capable of being created*.

This view is open to exception. If Incarnate Forms are not made of matter, they are bound to be imperishable and eternal. How God creates Himself is, in the last resort, a mystery of His Inscrutable Power, and ordinary analogies relating to worldly objects not being causes and effects while being and continuing absolutely intact and unchanged, does not help us in conceiving the theory of Divine Incarnation.

Madhusoodana and Venkatanath take it that आत्मानं in the clause 'तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहं' means "My Body."

Although this appears unexceptionable, Utkarsha Deepika warmly criticizes it. He differs from Madhusoodana who says that "God simply exhibits Himself in Forms that have, however, existed always." The objector asks, "if Sri Krishna's Body existed always, is that body identical with Brahman or different? If different, it must be unreal and can't be of the same stuff as Brahman (सच्चिदानन्द). If it be identical with Brahman, is it conditioned or unconditioned? If conditioned, it means that Brahman is *conditioned eternally*, and is unreal. If conditioned, how is shape and visibility possible?"

It seems to me that Madhusoodana's view about Avataric bodies being *eternal* and *non-material* does not suffer from these conundrums. Although God is identical with His Body and is unconditioned, He wills it that human eyes shall see some of His ever-existing Forms, and the will is realized at once.

Verse No. 8 declares the purposes for which incarnations occur. It speaks of three objects (1) To protect the good, (2) to punish the wicked and (3) to establish Dharma.

The Puranas tell us, for instance, as to the Ten Avatars of Vishnu, the following achievements.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Matsya (Fish) | 1. Killed Hayagreeva Asura. |
| | 2. Protected Satyavrata. |
| | 3. Redeemed and restored the Vedas. |

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Koorma (turtle) | 1. Protected Gods. |
| | 2. Discomfited Asuras. |
| | 3. Upheld Mandara Mountain. |
| Boar Form | 1. Killed Hiranyaksha. |
| | 2. Held up the Earth on His horn. |
| Narasimha | 1. Killed Hiranyakasipu. |
| | 2. Protected Sadhu Prahlada. |
| Vamana | 1. Discomfited Bali. |
| | 2. Protected Indra. |
| Parasurama | 1. Killed bad Kshatriyas 21 times. |
| | 2. Gifted the Earth to Kasyapa and Rishis. |
| Rama | 1. Killed Ravana and others. |
| | 2. Set a glorious example of upright rule. |
| Krishna | 1. Killed Kamsa and others. |
| | 2. Protected the Pandavas. |
| | 3. Established Dharma by Teachings. |

Buddha

1. Deluded Asuras.
2. Established the Dharma –
of harmlessness.

Kalki

1. Killed the wicked.
2. Restored Satya Yuga.

In the main, the Geeta declaration of purposes is borne out by these accounts given in Puranas.

Ramanujacharya and Desikar seem to think that God incarnates because He *cannot help doing so*. They speak of what he can achieve by merely willing it and what He cannot, except by and through Incarnation.

For instance, they say, God can give us Moksha Bliss by His will, and He need not incarnate for that purpose. God may establish Dharma by deputing a Rishi like Vyasa to teach the world. On the other hand, God cannot gratify and satisfy the devotee who yearns for Him, except by an Avatar. True worship cannot be established in the world except by means of Incarnation.

In this interpretation, the reader may clearly see some points in derogation and disparagement of God's omnipotence. No theist who exalts God as all-powerful, can consent to the differentiation between acts which God can accomplish by fiat of Will and those which He cannot, by that means. A true and vital conception of God - head invests him with

inconceivable power to achieve anything by any means whatever. The true explanation for Incarnations, as for other doings of His, lies in the truth that He chooses to do so and He is the uncontrolled chooser and master of means and ends. That He incarnates for certain ends does not mean that he cannot achieve those ends otherwise, if it please Him to do so.

In passing, a word about Vyasa. While Sri Madhwa and Sankaracharya regard Vyasa as an Avatar of Vishnu, Ramanujacharya seems to view him as a mere Rishi. Scriptural authority may be quoted in abundance against this depreciation of Vyasa. But space forbids this attempt.

Of the three purposes spoken of in the text, for which incarnations are undertaken, Desikar thinks that establishment of Dharma might be achieved otherwise too. Of the two others left, the punishment or destruction of evil is ancillary to the main purpose *viz.*, protection of the good. Thus, in this view, the last alone is the purpose.

Sridhara and Neelakanta say that the end of Incarnation is Dharma. For this end, the good are protected and the wicked are punished. Hence, these two objects, although stated prominently in the Geeta verse, must be understood as subordinate and subsidiary to the main object of establishing Dharma.

Utkarsha Deepika objects to this kind of classification. He thinks that where the text declares three main objects, there is no reason to distribute them

under main and sub-heads, and call some one the chief, and some other, subsidiary. He points out that there have been some Avatars which were prominently addressed to all the three ends and others that limited their activity to some alone.

It seems to me that it is a needless endeavour trying to appraise the relative merits of the three chief points mentioned in the text. They seem to be all of them equally important. They are so dovetailed with one another that their relation is, more often than not, one of inter-dependence. If the wicked are punished, that by itself is one way of protecting the good. If the good be protected and the wicked punished, these two acts lead, apart from more, to Dharma. So *vice versa*.

Then again, the Geeta verse should not be too literally understood as limiting the purposes in view to three in number. Sri Krishna touches on the main objects of Incarnations and they are comprehensive enough. But there is no intention to restrict them to three only. Truly speaking, the achievements of Divine Incarnation are infinite and it is hard to group and classify them exhaustively under a few designations.

9) जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥

कर्म	...	work
च	...	and
मे	...	My
दिव्यं	...	transcendental – of Divine essence.
एवं	...	thus
यः	...	who
वेत्ति	...	knows
तत्त्वतः	...	truly
त्यक्त्वा	...	leaving
देहं	...	the body
पुनर्जन्म	...	re-birth
न, एति	...	does not get into
मां	...	Me
एति	...	reaches
सः	...	he
अर्जुन	...	O! Arjuna

“He who thus truly knows My incarnations and My work to be of Divine essence, does not get into re-birth after leaving the body, but reaches Me.”

It is here stated what reward is in store for him who understands the true nature of Divine incarnation and work. The devotee is called upon to realize the Divinity of Avatars, and why and wherefore they are undertaken. He is not to believe that they are

similar to men's births, for these are impelled by forces beyond their control. He is not to mistake them to be of flesh and blood like our mortal frames. He is not to attribute to them any quality that is calculated to reduce or alloy their Divine Greatness and Purity.

Stress is to be laid on the word तत्त्वः. It is of comprehensive significance. It denotes the necessity of knowing God *truly*.

तत्त्व Means God in one of its Lexicon sense. Hence we are asked to believe in Avatars as God Himself and not as mere reflections.

तत्त्व is *nature*, स्वभाव. It follows that Incarnations and Divine work should be regarded as the result of mere spontaneity on His part, rather than as tasks which He undertakes under pressure.

The *summum bonum* of religious aspirations as stated herein is the devotee's reward. In the scriptures, we are told of many other items of truth we should know about God. The seekar has to live a pure life of study, devotion and meditation. He should believe in Hari and Vayu. He should know the hierarchy of Deities and how they work under Him. He should worship God with all his might, in such Forms and aspects as may be suited to his mental and spiritual calibre. The doubt, therefore arises whether the statement in the Geeta verse is meant to supersede every other teaching in the range of religious literature.

A verse in Koorma Purana says, "whoever knows *all that* is enjoined' by the Vedas and worships Me accordingly, is alone competent to see Me – and none other."

A passage in Garuda Purana says, "whatever is laid down in, or taught by, all the ever-existing Vedas and Vaishnava Scriptures, and whatever has been handed down by tradition, should be followed and obeyed, and God should be seen as the result of true knowledge. Those who do so, reach Mukti." It is thus clear that besides knowing of Divine Incarnation and work, we have to know and do a great deal, before we are in sight of redemption.

Sri Madhwa comments on this point and says that the Geeta text is to be understood cumulatively. It does not exclude the authority of other teachings. The intention is to lay down that whoever does not understand the nature of Divine Incarnations and work, has no chance. In other words, it is indispensably necessary that the aspirant should know of this among many others he should acquire a true knowledge of.

Sri Madhwa quotes a passage from Brahma Vaivarta where the canon of interpretation is laid for such cases. Where some texts speak of certain beliefs and observances as essential to Mukti and other texts speak of others, the intent is that all should be accepted without any mutual exclusion.

This canon of construction helps us on another point of doubt arising from the literal meaning of

the text. It is said, "He leaves the body and reaches Me." Does it mean that the seer is translated to Mukti, although his Prarabdha is yet unexhausted and he has to work them out by further births. Does Sri Krishna intend that the knowledge of Divine Incarnation and work is of such efficacy as to wipe off Prarabdha altogether, so that there is no need at all for re-birth?

The answer to the question is in the negative. For, the subject is discussed in the Brahma Sootras, and the conclusion is laid down that the sage who has visioned God has to take as many re-births as may be necessary to exhaust Prarabdha and complete his qualification.

It follows, therefore, that, in the statement of the text, "on leaving the body he reaches Me," the body referred to is the final one when all Prarabdha has been exhausted and no further or other impediment stands in the way.

Ramanujacharya thinks, however, that the *body* referred to is *that one* where the devotee acquires the knowledge of God's जन्म and कर्म. He takes the statement literally. He does not believe in the need for many a re-birth for exhausting Prarabdha. Why not exhaust all in one and the same birth, he asks. He quotes Vyasa as an instance of this achievement.

This view is opposed to the Brahma Sootras. There is no authority for the supposition that whatever be the quantum of Prarabdha that has to be

worked out, the sage could accomplish it all in a single life. The reference to Vyasa is based on the erroneous belief that Vyasa had any Prarabdha at all dominating him. Vyasa is an Avatar of Narayana and, happily, far above any Karma.

I have already drawn attention to the sharp conflict among members of the Monistic School, as to whether the Divine Avatar is of Brahmic essence or of material stuff. Madhusoodana and Neelakanta hold the former view, and Sankarananda and others adopt the latter.

Anxious to reconcile the Geeta text with the Adwaitic belief that self-realization alone is the way to Mukti, Sankarananda has tortured the present text so as to make out what he wants. He reads दिव्यं to mean Brahman. He reads it over again to mean प्राकृत = 'material.' He then renders the passage thus : "Whoever knows Brahman, after distinguishing it from His Avatar and His work which are material, illusory and unreal, reaches Me." Thus, the devotee is not saved by a knowledge of God's जन्म and कर्म, but by discarding them. He is saved by releasing Brahman from the Mayic stuff and visioning it in its own essence.

By this interpretation, Sankarananda has, no doubt, valiantly rescued Monism. But the language of the verse and the context protest against it. Sri Krishna has been speaking of His Avatars, and, at the end, in holding up the Avatars as transcendental, He points out the blessing that waits upon the knower

thereof. If it be the knower of Brahman, as distinguished from the knower of Avatars, that is contemplated, the statement is quite out of place in this context. Nor is the language of the verse more helpful to Sankarananda. The object of the verb 'knows' (वेत्ति) is जन्म and कर्म. There is nothing to show that these are meant to be brushed aside rather than known.

The text says "Reaches Me" – To reach Iswara is not Mukti according to this school, Iswara being but the lower Brahman.

Some feasts of etymology have been performed here, so as to force the word दिव्यं to mean Brahman as well as Prakriti. It would be interesting to know what Venkatanatha who hates these feats would have to say on such a point. He would probably condone, Sankarananda being a brother of the same school. But, if he had only seen Sri Madhwa do it, he would surely have darted at him in fury.

10) वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥

वीतरागभयक्रोधाः	...	Devoid of passion, fear and anger
मन्मयाः	...	full of Me
मां	...	Me
उपाश्रिताः	...	relying on

बहवः	...	many
ज्ञानतपसा	...	by the penance of wisdom or by wisdom and penance
पूताः	...	purified
मद्भावं	...	Being in Me
आगताः	...	have attained

“Devoid of passion, fear and anger, full of me, and relying on Me, many have been purified by the penance of wisdom (or by wisdom and penance) and have attained the state of being in Me – (सायुज्य)”.

This furnishes an answer to two doubts : – (1) Whether any one has had salvation before from such a knowledge and (2) how this knowledge leads to salvation. The former doubt is met by the statement that many have achieved salvation by this means, and the latter, by the further steps of spiritual progress being pointed out to which that same knowledge leads.

He who firmly believes in God as an all-protecting Father ever providing for his well-being, has no need to be greedy, fearing and angry. Prahlada is a great instance in point. He believed in Providence with all his heart and all his soul. He cared not for any worldly object or pleasure. He rejected toys and games, and spent days and nights absorbed in contemplation, tears of joy trickling down his cheeks. His father subjected him to the severest trials and punished him with tortures.

He remained cool and fearless throughout, so confident in God that never did a muscle of his move in agitation. When his father met his deserts at last, Prahlada behaved with touching magnanimity and begged of God for mercy unto the soul of his father. Here was an instance of utter forgiveness unalloyed by the remotest selfishness or wrath. Such devotees are pure in the fire of penance and wisdom. Their work is holy, and knowledge, high. In some, their penance is wisdom. In others, there is both penance and wisdom ; for, they fast and abstain, and practise self-denial to a degree, besides studying, contemplating, and knowing of God.

As explained in the final chapters of the Bhagavad Geeta, the Tapas of sages is found (1) in bodily service, (2) in speech, and (3) in the mind. They dedicate themselves to love and service, and promote the happiness of fellow-men, elders, preceptors, the twice-born and the holy, and lead a life of abstemious studentship. In speech they are gentle, and they utter nothing but the truth. Whatever they say is agreeable. They are engaged always in studying or teaching. This is their penance of speech. Their mind is clear, cheerful, introspective and unagitated. It restrains speech and insists on purity of motive. This is their penance of the mind.

There are two expressions in the text which are seized with avidity by Monists and help up as unmistakable pronouncements in support of Advaita. These are मन्मयाः and मद्भावमागताः . These are constructed

by them to denote the actual transformation of the sages into Brahman.

मन्मय, However, does not necessarily mean, “transformed into Me.” It means, as in the case of Prahlada, that the devotee is full of God, caring nothing for the world, ever thinking of Him and always giving Him the foremost place in all his thoughts. To one like Hanuman who see Rama before and behind, in all the four quarters of the compass, among all the objects within the range of senses, and who thinks of none else and nothing else, it may be truly said that the Universe is राममय for him and he himself is राममय. The expression is a forcible way of stating the all – absorbing character of the beloved object.

In Sankara Bhashya मन्मय is rendered into “one who *sees the identity of God* with the Universe.” There is nothing in the expression itself to denote the *Seer of identity*. The word may mean “Those who have become Me” but not “one who thinks or fancies himself identical with Me.”

In Sanskrit मय means ‘made of’ or ‘saturated with’. Among members of the Adwaita school, Neelakanta and Sridhara adopt the meaning “*full of Me in thought or devotion.*”

मद्भावं is by, Sankaracharya and some others, rendered to denote identity with Brahman, this being their idea of the goal. Madhusoodana, however, adopts

as an alternative sense, "devotion to Me", भाव being taken to denote 'devotion or love to God.' Sreedhara adopts just the meaning of Sri Madhwa, that it denotes *the Mukti of living in and with God*. It must be remembered that मामेति in the last verse and मद्भावमागताः in the present verse convey the same import. "They reach Me" – is the statement in the last verse. Consistently with this, is the expression मद्भाव to be construed. Emancipation thus consists in reaching Him, living by His side, ever seeing Him, and enjoying His Presence, rather than an out and out conversion into His essence.

Venkatanatha reverses the reasoning and argues that as मद्भाव indicates metamorphosis into God-head, मामेति of the last verse also should mean not mere 'reaching' but *becoming* God. There is no special ground to take stand on मद्भाव first and adjust the meaning of मामेति consistently therewith, and there is no reason stated or found against the converse being done.

After all, Adwaitaic commentators do not say that Sri Krishna and Brahman are absolutely synonymous terms. There is no chance for any one to become Sri Krishna, although they say there is, for one to become Brahman. The Geeta verse under comment speaks of relying on Sri Krishna and reaching Him or becoming Him. There is no reference at all to the Absolute. But this is not Mukti in the Monistic System. So, without straining the First Person

Pronoun in मन्मयाः and मद्भाव the idea of Unification with Brahman is hard to evolve out of the text.

11) ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

ये	...	people
यदा	...	in whatever manner
मां	...	Me
प्रपद्यन्ते	...	worship
तान्	...	them
तथा	...	in that manner
एव	...	only
भजामि	...	I serve
अहं	...	I
मम	...	My
वर्त्म	...	path
अनुवर्तन्ते	...	follow
मनुष्याः	...	men
पार्थ	...	O! Arjuna
सर्वशः	...	all

“In whichever manner, people worship Me, I serve them in that same manner. All men follow My path, O! Arjuna.”

It is not everyone that worships God in the right spirit. Versed in the Vedas and knowing the God Supreme in a general way, many people wish for blessings of various kinds here and hereafter. Such men are also blessed by God, but their reward is limited to their own deserts and aspirations. These men are known as त्रैविद्याः, for they are superficially versed in the three Vedas. If these be blessed with Mukti too, then there will be no difference between them and the true seer. This is not as it should be. If the treatment of these and of the seer vary, as it ought to, there should be grounds for the differentiation, as God is never wrongly partial. The present verse is intended to allay these doubts.

It is said here that God blesses the worshipper as he deserves. As त्रैविद्याः seek not Vaikunta but only lower Heavens or fruits, they get what they want. They worship the Gods and obtain rewards. But even here, the true bestower of boons is Sri Krishna and not the Gods. The second line of the verse says "All follow My path". It means that the so-called worshippers of other Divinities also get their rewards from the God Supreme who is the only true source of blessings. As Sri Krishna says elsewhere in the Geeta, "I am the Doer, the Beneficiary and Master, of every Yagna." Without His will, not a blade of grass can move. He is the prime cause of every action, and to Him belongs the fruit. If it be objected that, as the worshipper prays to Indra, it is Indra that blesses him, we say it is not so.

Firstly because, Indra is incompetent independently to confer any boon. Secondly, Indra and all the Vedic names of Deities signify the God Supreme; for, He alone appropriately bears all the Vedic names in their true significance, and the Brahma Sootras, Ist Adhyaya, has discussed this fully and established the point as stated. Thirdly, *Trividyas* are not persons who have no knowledge at all of Sri Hari. If they were total unbelievers and heretics, they would not be known by that name at all. To deserve that name they should be Vaishnavas in a general sense. Unless they dedicate unto Sri Hari, at the end at least, the sacrifices meant for Indra and other Gods, they cannot obtain even the transient rewards they seek. Such is the theory. Hence Sri Krishna states in the text, "I bestow such boons as are deserved. Every one has to look to Me for blessing."

The point that God alone is the source of every blessing is discussed in a series of Aphorisms in Brahma Meemamsa, Adhyaya 111-2-39 onwards (*Vide Sanskrit Exposition*).

A passage in Agneya Purana★

★ अन्यदैवतपूजापि यस्मिन्नन्ते समर्पिता ।

स्वर्गादिफलहेतुस्यान्नान्यथा तं भजेद्धरिम् ॥

says that the worship of other Divinities is abortive of results unless, at the end at least, it is offered to Vishnu.

According to Sri Madhwa's system, a section of Jeevas is permanently wedded to Samsara. They are ever in worldly life, their knowledge being of a mixed kind and their pleasures ever mingled with sufferings. त्रैविद्याः by which name are known those whose knowledge is of a mixed kind, high and low, belong mostly to this middle section of Jeevas and are Nityasamsarins.

Within the school of Sri Madhwa, there is divergence between Sri Vadiraja Swami, on the one hand, and many a text-writer on the other, on the question whether these Jeevas are ever liberated from their *Lingasarira*, by which name is known the subtlest material embodiment of the soul. It is agreed that the best section of Jeevas gets liberated and reaches Vykunta, and the worst too gets liberated and goes to Tamas. The doubt is whether the middle section obtains any liberation from material bondage before the said souls wend their way to their own goal. Sri Vadiraja Swami holds that they also get liberation and proceed to enjoy an eternal condition of mixed pleasures and sufferings akin to Samsara.

Other commentators, however, say that emancipation or liberation holds good in the case of the other two classes alone. The point, however, seems to be one chiefly of academical interest. For, in the result, all are agreed that the condition of these Jeevas is one of mixed joys and griefs, with *Lingasarira* sticking on, or knocked off.

Commentator Krishnacharya (Umarji) has devoted a long note under this Geeta verse to this topic and argues against the notion of *Linga Bhanga*. The occasion to discuss this point, which looks a digression more or less, is furnished by a short statement in Prameya Deepika to this effect, “No doubt, I (Sri Krishna) do not give Mukti to त्रैविद्याः but I bestow on them what they deserve.” From this, Krishnacharya argues that त्रैविद्याः never get Mukti, but are Nityasamsaris permanently fixed up.

It is not convenient to note the details of this discussion here as it involves the examination of many a subtle text in the range of Sri Madhwa’s and Sri Jaya Theertha’s writings. One who is interested may refer to the Sanskrit commentary.

As observed already, the chief point in the Geeta verse under comment is that God blesses everybody according to his prayer and merits. This exonerates God from any charge of partiality in the distribution of rewards.

That this is the chief purport is acknowledged by the commentators of the Sankara School also.

Madhusoodana’s annotation is much like ours. Instead of contrasting त्रैविद्याः with Seers, as we do, he takes four classes of worshippers referred to in the verse of the Bhagavad Geeta elsewhere:— “आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ” 1. the sufferer, 2. the seeker of knowledge, 3. the seeker of boons and 4. the sage.

Of these, the first and the third are more or less mercenary in aim and correspond largely to त्रैविद्याः. Sri Krishna says, according to this author, that He distributes to each his merited reward. The second line is also interpreted by him, as we do, to the effect that Sri Krishna is the only true source of every boon or blessing.

Sankarananda has a startling commentary to offer. He dwells on the Advaita distinction between the Higher Brahman and the Lower Brahman, which, he says, are the Unmanifest and the Manifest respectively. The *gnanayogin* seeks the former and the *karmayogin* the latter. Men, in general, incline to the Lower Brahman who is the patron of *Karmayoga* and engage in work consequently:

To me, all this is jargon. Taking the 2nd line first, Sankarananda's interpretation that men resort to *karmayoga* only, because Iswara likes it specially in preference to *gnanayoga*, is altogether far-fetched. There is no reason to think that Iswara has nothing to do with *gnanayoga* and that the Higher Brahman alone is concerned therewith. The existence of ascetics like Sankaracharya and Sankarananda must alone suffice to answer the proposition that *all* men incline to or engage themselves in worldly work and never in *gnanayoga*.

The depreciation of Iswara as a Lower Brahman and of *karmayoga* too in the bargain, is unwarranted, as if neither Iswara nor *karmayoga* can be bestowers of bliss. In truth, it is seen stated over and over again

that Sri Krishna, truly worshipped by the *gnanayogin*, *karmayogin* or *Bhaktiyogin*, as the case may be, confers the bliss eternal, through the necessary stages of spiritual progress.

Neelakanta thinks that the possible charge of partiality which the text is meant to answer, arises from verse 8, chapter IV, where the Lord says, "He protects the good and punishes the wicked." From this, says he, arises the objection why should God deal differently with these two classes of men ? The answer is said to be "I deal with men according as they *love* Me or *hate* Me ; if, however, they are devoted to Me, know Me and meditate on Me, then I serve them."

In this rendering, there is a good deal of strain. The statement that God protects the good and punishes the wicked is fairly complete in itself and furnishes the answer that because the former are good they get protection and because the latter are wicked they are punished. Upon this, there is no room at all for the objection or doubt, why God should deal differently with the two groups of men.

Nor is the language of the text helpful to Neelakanta. Literally, the words mean "As they worship Me, so I reward them." The word *worship* does not include the idea of hate or non-worship, except perhaps by some violence. Nor does 'reward' imply suffering or penalty. In the second line, there is only a bare statement of fact that "all men follow the path

of God.” It is no doubt enigmatical and requires explanation. But Neelakanta expands it to mean “If people love Me, and meditate on Me, I *follow them*”. There is no warrant in the verse for the conditional clause begun by ‘If’. There are no words for the main predication, “I follow them.” On these lines, the author of Utkarsha Deepika (a brother of the same school) condemns Neelakanta’s comment and even attributes it to a wilful eagerness on his part to differ from Sankaracharya and exhibit his own cleverness and originality.

Whereas almost all the commentators take the view that the text is intended to affirm the impartiality of God and justify the unequal treatment He extends to various classes of men, Ramanujacharya alone thinks that the verse does not contemplate this matter at all. In his opinion, the text states how easy and accessible God is to Bhaktas by incarnating for their benefit in whatever form or shape they wish. As God descends below in any Form such as Deva, Man or Beast, devotees have their wishes gratified to the utmost degree. If it be wished that God should take Avatar as a Son, Father, Brother, Husband, or Friend, He complies readily.

It is a peculiar tenet of Ramanujacharya that idols or images form distinct Avatars of God. It is believed by him and his followers that the images worshipped, as, for instance, in Srirangam, Conjeevaram or Tirupati, are instances of Archavatara (Avatar as idols of worship).

Desikar therefore interprets the Geeta verse as including Archavatara idols and images, which prove the mercy and condescension of God.

In the second line, “वर्त्म” is construed to mean ‘Divine characteristics.’ “अनुवर्तन्” is deemed to be a reference to the bliss of personal communion enjoyed by devotees with the Incarnate Forms of God. In Archavatara, as Bhaktas carry Images about in streets, adorn them with jewels and garlands, and celebrate festivities in honour thereof, all these enjoyments are denoted by the 2nd line of the text.

Enough has been said to indicate the line of argument pursued by Desikar and his master, and it is needless to reproduce further details.

There is no reason why we should object to the statement that God gratifies His Bhaktas in any manner they pray, and exhibits Himself in the Avataric Form they choose to desire. Vasudeva had prayed to be blessed with a son equal to God and so he obtained God Himself as Sri Krishna. When Sri Krishna fought a duel with the Bear Jambavan over a precious Ruby, the latter meditated on Ramachandra, and the sequel was that Sri Krishna showed Himself as Rama.

What, however, is difficult to understand is that the verse under comment contemplates *only* Avataric exhibitions and refers to no other kind of boon or blessing conferrable on Bhaktas. To appear in a desired Avatar is only one of numberless desires, wishes or prayers, that the Bhakta may address to God. Why

is the general statement of the verse restricted to Avatars alone ?

The theory about Archavatara is as novel as it is startling. There is no warrant for it in ancient Scripture and no authority is quoted by Desikar. It staggers one to be told that the metallic or wooden images seen in temples are themselves God and not mere houses or vehicles of Divine Presence. More startling yet is the tenet that the said idols and images are non-material in build, and are of spiritual essence (*Sat, Chit, and Ananda*).

Looking at the language of the verse again, it is quite plain that Sri Krishna is thinking of rewards unequally meted out to sages and non-sages. One sees absolutely no justification to think of temple festivities, ornaments, garlands and offerings, in the 2nd line of the verse.

To sum up briefly, Sankarananda is wrong in reading the verse as a piece of special pleading in favour of Karmayoga and the Lower Brahman. Neelakanta has erred in including the *hatred of God* and its dire penalties as contemplated here. Ramanujacharya has erred by darting off at a tangent and restricting the verse to Avataric boons and blessings only, including therein a peculiar cult relating to idol worship.

Differing from all these, is Madhusoodana. He makes out the purport to be that, although God treats worshippers unequally, He does so for good reasons

like an impartial judge. Whichever Deity a man may worship, that worship goes, in fact, to God who is the only true source of every good.

This in the main is also the rendering of Sri Madhwa. That there should be arrangement between two such writers is eloquent proof of its soundness.

12) काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥

काङ्क्षन्तः	...	wishing for
कर्मणां	...	of work
सिद्धिं	...	fruits
यजन्तः	...	those who sacrifice for
इह	...	here
देवताः	...	for the Gods
क्षिप्रं	...	quickly
हि	...	indeed
मानुषे	...	in the human
लोके	...	world
सिद्धिः	...	fruition
भवति	...	takes place
कर्मजा	...	of work

“Here, those who sacrifice for the Gods, wishing for the fruits of work, are also followers of My path. In the human world, work bears fruit quickly indeed.”

This is an explanation of the statement in the last foregoing verse that everyone follows the path of God. It has been explained already what is meant by every one following the Divine Path. As God is the Universal actor in the true sense, as He is the only true enjoyer and beneficiary of everyone's doings as He is the true bearer of all Vedic designations and as He alone confers boons even though prayers are addressed to other Gods, every one is said to follow His path.

The present verse is a continuation of the last one. Put together, the construction is that those who offer sacrifice to the Gods in the hope and belief that they grant boons, are, really speaking, followers of the Divine path. In fact, this verse furnishes the nominative कांक्षन्तः of the verb "follow," अनुवर्तन्ते, of the last verse.

Among the explanations as to why every one is said to follow the Divine Path, some of them do not require further demonstration. Every Jeeva is a dependent Being. Hence it is clear that God is the true Actor and prompts every Jeeva to work. That God is the true bestower of every boon requires some elucidation. The 2nd line of the present verse furnishes light on this point. Because men obtain boons quickly for rituals performed, it may be inferred that God is the sender thereof. But for Him, even the Gods are unable to grant the sacrificer's prayer, nor can they grant the fruits quickly. The quick return that the sacrificer obtains proves that God intervenes even

though the invocation is addressed to other Deities. The passage in Agneya Purnana (quoted on page 55) is clear authority for this position.

All the commentators except Ramanujacharya are agreed that the present verse is a continuation of the last one.

Ramanujacharya, however, thinks that, with this verse, a new theme is begun. He is of opinion that the last verse concluded the subject of Avatars and closed the digression. The present verse resumes the abandoned thread of *karmayoga*. Before dealing actually with the *gnana* element of *karmayoga*, the Lord devotes six verses (12-13-14-15-16 & 17) to prefatory matter, the first four of which deal with 'doers,' and the remaining two with the nature of Karma. Among the four relating to 'doers', the present one simply conveys a gentle regret that people *will resort* to other Gods and *will not do* Karmayoga, unselfishly, because they are greedy of fruit and the Divinities they apply to, grant boons and very quickly too. Desikar quotes a Sruti (of Yajur) about God Vayu being thus prayed to and yielding blessings at once.

Sri Madhwa differs from this view and thinks that the verse is, as already pointed out, a continuation of the last. Sankarananda and Neelakanta are also of opinion that the verb "follow My Path" governs the nominative कश्चित्: 'those who wish' of the present one. Thus, according to these three authors, the present verse is meant to show how all men pursue the Divine Path.

Sankaracharya and Madhusoodana think that the present one is an explanation, not of the statement that all men follow the Divine Path, but of the fact that many people do not do so in this world. To the query 'why do not all men resort to you?' the answer given is, "Alas, men are drawn away by other Gods whose boons are sure and quick."

I need hardly point out more particularly the divergence thus clear between Sankarananda and Neelakanta on the one hand and other members of the Sankara school such as Madhusoodana etc., on the other.

Sankarananda's interpretation is that as *karmayoga* is a step towards *gnana*, Karmayogins are pursuers of the Divine Path, though indirectly. Gnana being the Divine Path, what leads to *gnana* is also included in the Path. The lower Gods yield चित्तशुद्धि, i.e., mental purity, for *gnanayoga*. Hence, rituals addressed to those Gods are also in the Divine Path as they secure, from the said Gods, the wished-for boon of mental purity.

I may observe that this annotator is unique in the view that कर्म in this verse is not *mercenary* karma, but the unselfish karma of *karmayoga*. Being addressed to Gods other than the Lord, it seems clear that they seek for boons here and in Swarga and सिद्धि the *boon* contemplated cannot be 'mental purity'. It does not appear that when sordid ends loom in the view of the sacrificer, minor Gods confer 'mental purity.'

Laying stress on the expression *मानुषे लोके* 'human world' in the text, Sankarananda says that the distinction of caste and order prevails only here, and that, in the higher world, that distinction is unknown. A remarkable passage in Moksha Dharma (Santi Parva) has to be drawn attention to in this connection. (See Sanskrit commentary). It says "Adityas are Kshatriyas. Maruts are Vaisyas. The Aswins are Soodras. Angirasas are Brahmins. Thus the distinction of four castes prevails among the Devas also.". More of this under the next verse (No.13).

Neelakanta takes *कर्म* in the text to mean *काम्यकर्म* *selfish, purposeful* ritual, – and the boon thereof to be worldly gains or Swarga, and not fruits such as 'mental purity.' Thus construing, he says that rituals addressed to other Gods fall within the path of the God Supreme, because, He alone is the true Actor and Enjoyer of all work. To this, if Neelakanta had added the reason that none of the Gods is by himself competent to confer any boon immediate or belated, and that the Supreme God alone can do it and quickly too, his comment would have been full.

Turning now to Madhusoodana, we see that he also takes the text to deal with *काम्यकर्म* (selfish ritual) addressed to the lower Gods. He does not agree with Neelakanta in saying that rituals fall within the Divine Path in any sense. So, he spares himself the task and trouble of showing their relation to the Supreme Deity. He thinks that what is meant is but a regret that men pray unto Gods and get rewards

quickly, instead of pursuing the harder and longer journey of 'mental purity' and *gnana*.

To sum up in a few words, Ramanujacharya thinks that this is a new theme, the digression dealing with Avatars ending with the last verse. He says, Gods yield quick fruits to the mercenary seekers thereof.

Sankarananda thinks that Gods bestow mental purity, and quickly too, on the performer of sacrifices.

Neelakanta thinks that selfish doers too fall within the Divine Path in the sense that the Supreme God is the true Actor and Enjoyer of every action.

Madhusoodana thinks that the present verse explains why all men do not follow Him and why many people resort to other Deities, allured by their quickly-given boons.

Sri Madhwa's interpretation largely resembles Neelakanta's in this verse. From motives of quickly obtained benefit, men do worship other Gods. But they are followers of Sri Krishna in a sense ; for, it is He and He alone that actually blesses every sacrifice and ritual, that prompts every action, enjoys every fruit, and bestows every boon. Moreover, no boon results at all unless the devotee praying to other Gods, dedicates his worship to Sri Narayana at the end at least. Thus the verse is probative and illustrative of the truth that Sri Krishna is the Supreme Doer and Giver of all blessings.

13) चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥

चातुर्वर्ण्यं...	the four castes
मया	... by Me
सृष्टं	... were created
गुणकर्मविभागशः ...	pursuant to divisions of character and conduct
तस्य	... of that
कर्तारं	... creator
अपि	... although
मां	... Me
विद्धि	... know
अकर्तारं	... non-creator
अव्ययं	... unaffected

“ The four castes were created by Me pursuant to divisions of character and conduct. Although I am the creator thereof, know Me as non-creator, and unaffected.”

The Lord refers here to Himself as the creator of castes. It is not the Divinities spoken of in the last verse that create the world, divide men into castes and allot duties, privileges and functions, to all. Hence, the worshippers of other Deities deserve no bliss or boon, if they neglect the Father from whom castes have sprung and the rituals connected with them.

The statement that castes were created pursuant to men's character and conduct is important. The Brahmin who prides himself on his birth may well be staggered by this. But the true Brahmin traces his claim not to mere birth but to his merit. There are strong passages throughout the scriptural literature speaking with contempt of the twice-born people whose only claim to their position is that they are the sons of their fathers. Prahlada says (Bhag. VII) that he would prefer a Chandala to a Brahmin, if the latter be not learned and wise and devoted to God. Manu says that the twice-born person who is not learned is like an elephant of wood, or a toy made of leather. He says that any one who fails in his own legitimate duty becomes a Soodra at once, family and all. In the Mahabharata, Vana Parva, Yudhishtira declares that, if appropriate qualities do not appear in a person, he should not be deemed a person of that caste at all, although birth and ceremonies give him an apparent claim thereto.

Duryodhana is an instance of a false Kshatriya, and he deserved, in fact, to be entirely beyond the pale of any caste. Vidura, Dharma Vyadha and Kanaka Dasa, are instances of congenital Soodras who deserved to be more than Brahmins.

Leaving alone the castes based on mere accident, the Lord says that He allots castes according to men's conduct and quality.

In chapter XVIII of the Bhagavad Geeta, there are many verses devoted to the conduct of Brahmins,

Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Soodras. Patience, self-denial, penitence, study, bodily and mental purity, and other virtues, mark the Brahmin. Courage, intelligence, firmness, skill, liberality, power, dignity and so on, distinguish the warrior caste. Agriculture, trade, etc., is the avocation of the Vaisya. Service belongs to the Soodra.

About the *gunas*, much has been said in the Epics, Puranas, and elsewhere. The religious physicist attributes the material world to the operation of *gunas*, - Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. These colour and shape everything. Their prototypes affect the inherent spiritual character even of the soul. Ignorance, dullness, inertia, darkness of every kind, forgetfulness, stupidity and vices in general, are products of Tamas. Restlessness, activity, greed, passion, hilaric amusements, sacrifices for pelf and power, and all mercenary rites are dominated by Rajoguna. Virtue, beauty, cleverness, purity and clearness of thought, true strength and vitality, are instances of Satwika products.

In Aswa Medha Parva (Mahabharata), chapters 35 to 41 deal much with the three *gunas*. We have to note at the very outset that the *gunas* (Satwa, Rajas and Tamas) are never found in isolation. They are invariably met with in combination, the proportion varying in each individual and marking his place in the infinite gradation of virtue and vice.

As already stated, based on *gunas* is the division of castes. In this connection, it is to be observed that,

according to passages in Moksha Dharma and Brihad Bhashya, even Devas are divided into castes. The four-faced Brahma is said to be of the Brahmin caste. Vayu, Sesha, Garuda and Adityas are Kshatriyas. The Vasus are Vaisyas and the Aswins are Soodras, and so on. But all this is not to be taken too literally. For, the distribution of Jeevas into castes seems to be confined to the human world. What is meant by the above passages seems to me that each Deva is said to belong to that caste whose work and destinies he presides over. The commentator of Nyaya Deepika distinctly says that Devas and Asuras are not governed by this distinction and distribution.

All Jeevas, including in the term the totality of souls from the four-faced Brahma downwards, fall into 3 classes (1) Satiwika (2) Rajasa, and (3) Tamasa. Devas are Satwikas. Asuras are Tamasas, and Men belong to the middle class; *i.e.*, they are Rajasas. Among them, there is further sub-division into Satwikas, Rajasas and Tamasas. In this sub-division, men are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Soodras, according to the proportion of the three gunas in their nature and the preponderating element therein.

Those among men who are good, virtuous and devoted, and deserve salvation, are Satwikas. Those who are below them, being engaged in some sort of pious work, worshipping other Gods for boons, and performing rites and sacrifices with sordid ends in view, are Rajas as known as Traividya. These never get beyond Samsara. Tamasas are, of course, unbelievers and heretics.

Now we understand the reason for the Lord speaking of castes as based on character and conduct. He calls on us to know the true author of the distinction and the real basis of the division. He repels hereby any notion of partiality that men may charge Him with. For, proceeding strictly on the inherent merits of men, He allots to everyone his true position and function. If Traividyas get no boon, it is their own fault. If they choose to rely on other Gods and totally forget the God Supreme, they have only themselves to thank for the resulting poverty of fruits.

In the second line of the verse, there is an apparent paradox. "Know me *as the creator thereof and non-creator also*," is the statement. The commentators of the Advaitic school spring on this inconsistency, and, in jubilant exultation, point out that 'actor ship' is a myth and non-action is the truth. Venkatanath goes so far as to say that this verse sounds a veritable trumpet of victory for the Monist in support of the theory that *Brahman* is devoid of attributes and action.

I see little reason for this jubilation. If creation be a myth, why should Sri Krishna say in the first line that He created the castes? Why should He have prided Himself on the authorship of a mythical universe? It is no compliment to Him that He states a thing and in the very next breath so vitally contradicts Himself as to wipe away every trace of it. Nor is it more complimentary to Him that He spoke of Himself as *Iswara* and creator in the first line and immediately remembered

His identity with Para Brahman who is devoid of attributes and action. As for the matter of identity, Arjuna and others were as much Para Brahman as He, and, from the standpoint of the Absolute, Sri Krishna was a non-creator in no higher sense than Arjuna or any other person. If castes are unreal, what becomes of the doubts which this verse undertook to allay by pointing to castes being dependent on character and conduct, and owing their origin to God. At this point of the argument, the unreality of the created universe cuts the ground from under the feet, and the entire edifice of reasoning carefully built step by step in a series of verses collapses suddenly. We can hardly look at such a result with complacency.

It is needless to labor the point further. If the apparent paradox can be solved, we must do it in such a way as not to compromise Sri Krishna in any manner as a maker of rash statements. We must, if possible, restore to Him greatness as a true Creator and Father.

Ramanujacharya says that अकृतरं points to God being a creator, not as men and Gods are in a way, but to His being a creator of creators, a doer and performer in a sense of which we can have no conception.

Even Sridhara hesitates to join his brethren in construing अकृतरं to mean the unreality of creation. He thinks that the word points to God undertaking creation for no *unattained* object or fruit, and that He

is अव्ययं, because He is not in the least affected by consequences. As God feels no weakness, no anxiety, no passion, or greed, creation is but child's play to Him.

Sri Madhwa construes अकर्तारं more or less on similar lines. To the objector that God may be a कर्ता along with co-workers such as the Four-faced Brahma or Rudra, Sri Krishna replies, 'Not so. I am अकर्ता; in other words, there is no creator besides Me, helping Me or sharing my task.' To the possible objection, "If you are the Father, who is your Maker?" Sri Krishna says, "Not so; I am the Maker of all and I have no Maker myself." Then again, to the doubt that being a doer, Sri Krishna may be one like any one of us and that He might be a slave of egotism, passions and prejudice, Sri Krishna says, "Not so; My work is no other than Myself. It is non-material. There is no baseness in it. It is something inconceivably different from any known work of other beings."

These are intelligible and admissible renderings. Sri Madhwa quotes a verse in Naradeeya Purana which construes the very word अकर्ता in the manner aforesaid. The best argument in favour of Sri Madhwa is that his explanation saves for Sri Krishna the Universal Fatherhood He claimed for Himself in the first line of the verse.

14) न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥

न	...	not
मां	...	Me
कर्माणि	...	works
लिंपन्ति	...	affect
न	...	not
मे	...	to Me
कर्मफले	...	in the fruit of work
स्पृहा	...	attachment
इति	...	thus
मां	...	Me
यः	...	whoever
अभिजानाति	...	knows well
कर्माभिः	...	by karma
न	...	not
सः	...	he
बध्यते	...	is bound

“ Works do not affect Me. In Me, there is no desire for the fruit of works. Whoever knows Me thus, is not bound by karma.”

Sri Krishna declared himself a ‘non-doer’, although He was the doer of everything. In what senses he is a ‘Non-Doer’, has been stated already. One thing is certain. He is not a ‘doer’ as we are. He has none of our faults, failings and imperfections. If we are *doers* as we call ourselves in common parlance, He is a *non-*

doer, being unlike us in all that goes to make up our work. The text says, "Works do not cling to Me; in other words, I am not affected by them." This is the result of His being a 'non-doer' : for we, doers, are so strongly influenced by our doings that we plan them and carry them out to the detriment of our vital energies. We are fatigued or prostrated, and the execution hardly ever corresponds to proposal or expectation. The task often leaves us the poorer in health and strength. God's work produces none of these effects. Hence, He deserves to be known as a *non-doer*.

Then again, we hanker after fruits. It is this brings on passion and prejudice. The fever of gold or power or aggrandizement goads us from behind to put forth efforts and win. The ardent desire eats up our vitals. Disappointment robs us of flesh and blood, and leaves us pale and thin. Hope and fear shatter the foundations of our being. God, too, has His Will but this is very different to our desire. His will acts without any passion or anxiety. He has no need to hope or fear. He works, out of a spontaneous energy whose fund is limitless, and His laws and doings emanate with the utmost ease like breath out of nostrils. Because He is not enslaved by hope and fear like us, He is unaffected by deeds, and these do not cling to Him. From this non-clinging of acts, He derives his name as an अकर्ता.

The second line speaks of the devotee who thus knows God. True piety and knowledge consists in loving and knowing God in His greatness. One who un-

derstands God being unlike us, and who takes Him to be the cause of all causes and yet to be free from all the effects incidental to doing and working, is, as the second line of the verse states it, on the road to salvation. In this statement, there is a clear implication of God being, much more therefore, a freer Being than his Bhakta. If even the knower of God will soon be free, no reasons need be adduced to demonstrate that God is ever unbound.

It is agreed on all hands that the term 'non-doer' of the last verse accounts for the present verse which is intended to be an explanation. Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhwa say that God is truly a 'doer' and a 'non-doer' also. He is both, in absolute verity and reality. In him, the inconsistency does not matter, and, going further, there is no real conflict, because अकर्ता is used in a special sense. Sankaracharya takes it that God is truly not a doer at all, and that His work and works are all unreal.

Ramanujacharya and Desikar look at the subject of Divine authorship from a peculiar standpoint. They put it, more or less, to this effect : "I am not affected by the task I perform, of creating, maintaining, and destroying the world. I have no desires. I am a *non-doer*, being unlike any other known *doer*. Let none tax me with partiality. I am not responsible for disparities and inequalities. It is causes such as time, past *karma*, and a host of other reasons or agents, that bring about the same. I am only an on-looker. I disclaim all responsibility in the matter. No doubt,

I am the *efficient as well as the material cause of the world*, for, I am not only the father of all, like the potter who creates the pot, but I am also the earth that goes to make up the pot, and hence the material cause. In My case, the efficient cause is the same as the material cause."

In this exposition, we take exception to the tenet relating to God being the *material stuff* of the world's composition and the identity of the efficient cause therewith. Such a theory seriously compromises the God-head and dethrones God from his elevation as the independent cause of all causes, himself being always the *non-material Brahman* of Sat, Chit and Ananda, ever full, ever perfect and ever unbound. That he is or becomes matter for any cause or purpose is to us unendurable.

In explaining the well-known law of karma which accounts for the inequalities of worldly life and conditions, Ramanujacharya has used strong language to absolve God from all responsibility. While the charge of partiality is fully met, the pleading reduces the greatness of God as the Universal author of all effects. It is God that gives to Time, Karma, and whatever else is the proximate cause, its power to produce effects. I hope that in spite of expressions that seem to ignore this aspect, Ramanujacharya does not really dissent from this doctrine which is the bedrock of true theism.

Ramanujacharya thinks that the last verse and the present verse are meant only to state that the aspirant seeking to enter on *karmayoga* becomes

cleansed of such sins as impede his progress towards *karmayoga*. The meaning of this is not very clear. The verse says, 'One who knows God attains Mukti'. It is not clear whether the commentator does not narrow and belittle the fruit by restricting it to impediments (sin) being got rid of.

According to Sankaracharya, God's fatherhood is unreal. To explain this, the present verse says 'God is unaffected and desireless.' God is no doer nor enjoyer. The second line is meant to point out to every man that it is open to him to think himself a *non-doer* and get free. Sri Krishna is free because He is not only, in truth, a non-doer, but also knows it fully. The Jeeva is not free, because though he is, in truth, a non-doer, he fancies himself to be a doer.

With reference to this view, it is to be observed that Sri Krishna calls only Himself an अकर्ता. He does not include all men in that category, as He might have done if that were the truth.

If the second line of the verse did not contain the word मां which is unmistakably a reference to Sri Krishna, it may be possible to understand the verse as Sankaras wish. "Whoever thinks of *himself* to this effect, 'I am unaffected and desireless', becomes free" is the purport as they put it. Please note the words "thinks of *himself*" : the reflexive is important, as it denotes, *not Sri Krishna* the speaker, *but the devotee himself the thinker*. Instead of मां if the word was स्व or some reflexive pronoun, the rendering would be admissible, but not as it stands.

It is common ground that the verse under comment shows the superiority of God to Jeevas. Wherein lies the boasted superiority? For, the Jeeva's doings are no more real than Sri Krishna's. The Jeeva is, in truth, an unaffected and desireless being. Sankaras, therefore, say that, whereas Sri Krishna knows the *unreality* of all, the Jeeva does not. But neither the last verse nor the present one, as it is worded, contains a syllable to show that the distinction between the two lies in their respective knowledge. There is no room to thrust this idea of Iswara's knowledge and Jeeva's ignorance into any word of the two verses. Moreover, Sri Krishna speaking of Himself as अकर्ता refers to His being the absolute Brahman. The absolute, it need hardly be pointed, has no knowledge or thoughts.

Then again, if अकर्तृत्व rests on the ground that कर्तृत्व is unreal, why should the verse not say so? It is meant to explain that difficult word and remove an inconsistency. Why should it not say "I am अकर्ता because कर्तृत्व is false?" Instead of doing so, why beat about the bush, by speaking of लेप and स्पृहा and their absence.

Besides, we have to note that the Monist has, in order to obtain release, to realize *all* unrealities. लेप (being affected) is false. So is absence of लेप according to their peculiar creed. He is therefore bound to think of both लेप and no लेप as equally false. If no लेप be

false, two negatives bring on the positive, so that Sri Krishna becomes a लिप्त, an affected being.

In these circumstances, the tenet as to the unreality of doership seems to make no sense in this connection. It may be observed that Neelakanta and Sridhara do not care to follow Sankara Bhashya in this context. They do not harp on the 'unreality' of Divine Fatherhood. Neelakanta's meaning is, "I am unaffected. Hence I am a 'non-doer'.

Though I am a doer I am desireless. Therefore I am unaffected. The Jeeva on the other hand is desireful and attached. Hence his condition is different." Sridhara goes even closer to our interpretation following Vivriti very much. He says, "Though I create, maintain and destroy, none of My Works binds me, as I have not egotism (अहंकार). I am perfect. Hence I am desireless. Even my Bhakta who knows Me thus, gets release. Much more therefore, does it follow, without any special proof, that I am ever unbound."

It is very significant that these two Monist writers should prefer a Dwaita rendering to that of their own school. It is refreshing to note this and contrast it with the bitterness of Venkatanath in criticizing our rendering.

It looks as if our critic (Venkatanath) omitted to notice Sri Madhwa in the last verse by oversight.

He therefore hastens to set matters right by reverting to the last verse and writing out a long criti-

cism. He quotes us very briefly and recapitulates our position.

“(1) We say that though God is the Father of all and the Universal Doer, He is Fatherless – not owing His own existence or work to any one else.”

“(2) We say that God is a non-doer because He is not a doer in the sense which the word carries in respect to any other known doer in the world.”

The critic attacks these positions. He says against the first that it avoids the conflict between *Karta* and *Akarta* denoted by the word अपि. That God is the Father and that He is Himself fatherless, are not conflicting statements, but the text implies conflict. Hence, the critic says अकर्ता cannot mean ‘fatherless.’ It is not difficult to meet this objection. As all known fathers have fathers themselves, a fatherless father denotes an unknown state of things. It may be that, in this interpretation, the verbal contradiction is not forcible. But there is contradiction in sense. Moreover, अपि is not necessarily a denoter of contradiction. It is also a cumulative conjunction. Know me to be कर्ता, know me *also* to be अकर्ता, thus calling on Arjuna to be possessed of two items of knowledge not necessarily at conflict.

To the second position that God is a non-doer because He is unlike all other doers, the critic says there is no reason to restrict अकर्ता thus to mean a

'*dissimilar doer*', while it literally means *no कर्ता at all*. The critic forgets that Sri Krishna is not to be permanently fixed up in the verbal contradiction between कर्ता and अकर्ता. Both the words are not to be understood literally without the least modification or limitation of sense. Otherwise, the verse makes no sense. For this very purpose, the critic says God is कर्ता *untruly* and अकर्ता *truly*. Why does he bring in the limitation of 'truly' and 'untruly'? He chooses to call one, true, and another, false. We say both are true and reconcile the expressions which are but apparently at conflict. Venkatanath declaims against Sri Madhwa and goes on into irrelevant matters. Into this we need hardly enter. I don't think that this critic looks into Sri Madhwa's Bhashya or Tatparya at all before venturing on criticism. He sees Vivriti which is brief and laconic, not quoting scriptural authorities, and at once rushes off to attack us. For instance, in Geeta Tatparya of this verse (No.13) Sri Madhwa quotes Naradeeya Purana where the passage runs thus :—

“कर्तापि भगवान्विष्णुरकर्तेति च कथ्यते ।

तस्य कर्ता यतो नान्यः स्वतन्त्रत्वान्महात्मनः ॥”

“Although the Lord Vishnu is कर्ता, He is also called अकर्ता because there is none who is His cause, and He is absolutely self-reliant (Independent).”

Venkatanath winds up his note by sharply ac-

cusing Sri Madhwa of ruining himself and the Geeta also, out of obstinacy. Sri Madhwa can well take care of his own soul, and the critical need hardly be concerned about it. As for the Geeta verse, why does the critic spare his darts from Ramanujacharya who holds to the reality of कर्तृत्व, and Sridhara who chooses to follow in the wake of Sri Madhwa in this particular verse ?

15) एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥

एवं	...	thus
ज्ञात्वा	...	knowing
कृतं	...	performed
कर्म	...	work
पूर्वैः	...	by ancients
अपि	...	also
मुमुक्षुभिः	...	aspirants of मोक्ष (moksha)
कुरु	...	do
कर्म	...	work
एव	...	alone
तस्मात्	...	therefore
त्वं	...	you
पूर्वै	...	by ancients
पूर्वतरं	...	what was still more ancient
कृतं	...	performed

“Even by ancient sages (who were bent on full bliss in salvation) work was performed after this knowledge of Mine. Therefore you do work alone; – that which ancients performed as handed down from more ancient times.”

It may be recollected that, in chapter III, verse 20, Janaka and others were pointed out as examples of men perfected through the door of work. Vivaswan and his progeny were similarly quoted at the commencement of the present chapter. We have to see, for what purpose, ancients should be quoted again.

There is an important difference between Karma performed before God-vision and that done after that epoch-making stage. The difference is that the former is done for obtaining God-vision and the latter for ensuring the evolution of full bliss in Moksha. Chapter III, verse 20, quoted Janaka in support of the former point that, without recourse to asceticism, one might attain to perfection and secure God-vision by means of *Karmayoga* alone. The present reference is to ancients who did work even after God-vision for the sake of full bliss in Moksha. No doubt, Janaka too was a sage of achieved God-vision. But the allusion was to *karma* done by him *before* that stage. Hence there is no redundancy here.

The word मुमुक्षुभिः in the text may be taken, at the first blush, to indicate the mere aspirant who seeks God-vision; while the expression ज्ञात्वा कृतं = ‘performed after knowing’ favours the position that the sage who

has already visioned God is contemplated. For two reasons, the latter seems the preferable construction. (1) It avoids the redundancy based on Janaka already quoted being quoted again. (2) Arjuna was, in fact, a God-visioned Deva (son of Indra) although human environments had dimmed his vision. He might, therefore, urge an objection that, although men ought to work as Janaka did, for the sake of God-vision, he (Arjuna) need not do so. To meet this objection, Sri Krishna quotes ancients again for the point that *post-gnana* actions were done and should be done for securing fullness of Moksha bliss.

The only plausible objection to this view is, as already stated, the use of the word मुमुक्षु. The suffix उ of this word is capable, according to grammar, of denoting "one who perfects". The sage works, after God-vision, for completing and perfecting his qualification for the full measure of bliss, and मुमुक्षु may thus well denote the sage of achieved God-vision.

Sankara commentators think that the verse admits of both the positions. They say that the *mere seeker* as well as the *sage* fall within the scope of this verse. Sankarananda prefers to take the verse as referring to the full-blown sage alone.

The word 'एवं' = 'thus', gives trouble. This, however, is due to the circumstance that its antecedent is found in the last verse, and, in that verse, a variety of interpretations has been discussed. Broadly stated,

the monist commentators think that every man may work out his own salvation by thinking of *himself* as desireless and unbound. Sri Madhwa and Ramanujacharya say that the knowledge that is calculated to save is not the knowledge of one's own self but of God. मां in the last verse was taken by the Sankara school in the reflexive sense applying to every thinker, while the others took it to refer to the speaker *Sri Krishna*, alone. It is needless to go further into this as the *pros* and *Cons* have been already discussed. It is left to the reader to say whether a pious knowledge of God will save him of a mere fancy that he himself is an unaffected or desireless being although he is only too painfully conscious of griefs and sufferings and an incessant stream of desireful experiences.

16) किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥

किं	...	what
कर्म	...	is karma, work
किं	...	what
अकर्म	...	is non-work or wrong work
इति	...	as to
कवयः	...	the wise
अपि	...	too

अत्र	...	here
मोहिताः	...	are deluded
तत्	...	Therefore – or that
ते	...	to you
कर्म	...	work
प्रवक्ष्यामि	...	I will teach
यत्	...	which
ज्ञात्वा	...	having known
मोक्ष्यसे	...	you will get saved
अशुभात्	...	from Samsara

“As to what is ‘work’ and what is ‘no work’, even the wise are bewildered. Therefore, I will teach you what is ‘work’ – which having known, you will get saved from Samsara.”

In explaining how this verse is related to the previous one and stating the logical sequence and connection of the context, Sankaracharya points out that the example of ancients being quoted in the last verse led to Arjuna’s doubt to the following effect, ‘Sir, why should you quote the ancients’ example to me? Was your word not enough for me ? Would I not have implicitly obeyed you ? As you have, however, chosen to quote precedent, there is evidently some inner meaning and difficulty in the matter. Please tell me what it is’. To this, the Lord’s reply is, ‘you are right; there is something deep and hidden. What

is work, no work, and mis-work, is a troublesome puzzle which has bewildered even wise people'. This is Sankaracharya's rendering.

Sridhara sets out the logical sequence in a different way Having quoted the ancient's *Achara*, the Lord hastens to correct a possible misapprehension to the effect that every one should *blindly* follow what older people should choose to do. As, in fact, it is not desirable that men should be so sheepish, but should examine questions for themselves and discuss them with learned men before adoption, the Lord proceeds to discuss the subject more thoroughly than has been done yet.

The reader may see the difference in the standpoint of the two commentators. The former thinks that the superfluous quotation of precedent where none was required raised the doubt. The latter thinks that the Lord wished people to act more on reason than on precedent. Utkarsha Deepika criticizes Sridhara, with some reason, saying that his interpretation largely belittles the value of precedent. The Lord apparently attached a great deal of importance to *Achara*, and having held it up so prominently for Arjuna's adoption, He would not, in the verse next breath, speak so disparagingly of it as to say. 'never mind what ancients did – you better understand the point in the light of your own reason aided by discussions with learned men.'

While conceding that this criticism of Utkarsha Deepika is forcible, I cannot see how Sankaracharya's

introduction of the verse is more convincing. He thinks that because precedent was quoted, Arjuna's mind started a-thinking as to why the Lord should do so, and guessed deeper meanings than he knew. It is difficult to see why the reference to ancient *Acharya* should appear queer or rouse curiosity. The Lord had done the same thing before, by quoting Janaka in chapter III, and Vivaswan and others in the beginning of chapter IV, and Arjuna had felt no special doubts or curiosity in connection therewith.

There is, in truth, no reason to link this verse necessarily with the statement relating to *ancients' practice* of the last verse, as if the sequence could not be established otherwise. The Lord said 'do karma' in the last verse, and proceeds to discourse on its nature. Ancient *Acharya* was quoted and left alone, the thread of *karma* being resumed on its own merits. It was not intended that the precedent quoted should be lauded or belittled. Sri Madhwa therefore connects this verse with कुरु कर्म "do work" of the last.

In the text, the Lord kindles curiosity and interest by speaking of *karma* as difficult of comprehension. He says, it is a subject that has bewildered even learned men. And well, it may. For, *karma* taken as *action* or *work* is apt to mislead us seriously in respect to the teachings of the Bhagavad Geeta. The Lord is not taking pains to impress on Arjuna and the world the secular value of industry. He is presenting *karma* in a *special* aspect from the standpoint of philosophy and religion. He is going presently to

say that, from His standpoint, the busiest of men may be the idlest of indolents.

अकर्म in the first line stands for 'no work' and 'wrong work' (mis-work or विकर्म forbidden actions). For, the next verse speaks of (1) work, (2) no work, and (3) mis-work.

Ramanujacharya thinks that अकर्म here stands for *gnana*. His view, it may be remembered, is that *karmayoga* consists of two elements : (1) knowledge of the soul, and (2) work. These harmoniously combined constitute *karmayoga*. The text speaks of these two elements in the first line. To show that they are really harmonious parts of one and the same course, the second line says "That *karma* I will teach you." The object in referring to both *gnana* and *karma* by the word '*karma*' alone is, it is said by Desikar, to show the relative superiority of *karma*. In other words, the express mention of the more important carries the other with it by implication.

It appears to me that the language and the context are not favourable for the construction that अकर्म means here '*knowledge*' (ज्ञान). There is no sufficient reason to use such an expression as अकर्म which literally means 'absence of work,' to denote knowledge. The next verse speaks of कर्म, अकर्म and विकर्म. Wedged between कर्म and विकर्म, the word अकर्म denotes a predication about कर्म and not such a totally distinct

thing as ज्ञान. In the second line of the verse under comment, the Lord says He is going to teach कर्म. It is clear that, as the chief subject going to be taught, कर्म is prominently mentioned.

But ज्ञान (which अकर्म is said to stand for) is not inferior to कर्म. For, we find that Ramanujacharya, commenting on verse No.33 which says, "All and every *karma* is merged in and complete by *gnana*," states in so many words that the gnana element of *karmayoga* is far superior to the *karma* part. Hence, it is difficult to follow the argument that the Lord used the word कर्म in the 2nd line of the text rather than the word ज्ञान because the former is superior to the latter. But there is no question that कर्म is superior to अकर्म and विकर्म.

The superiority arises from the circumstance that कर्म is something to be adopted and practised, while the other two are only to be known and avoided. If कर्म is truly understood, अकर्म and विकर्म are naturally eschewed. Thus, it is permissible to speak of *karma* prominently and make it stand for itself and also for अकर्म and विकर्म in the sense of "no work" and "mis-work." The reader may see that the verse seems somewhat strongly worded in one or two respects. कवयः denotes 'very learned men'. Even they, it is said, are unaware of the nature of true *karma*. In the 2nd line,

the knower of *karma* is rewarded with no less than emancipation. Surely, there are many intermediate steps between the knowledge of कर्म and the goal. There is, for instance, regularly practised कर्मयोग ; there is firm conviction and belief produced and cultivated by study ; and there is next, *God-vision* to be attained before (by the grace of God) salvation is reached.

Thus, in respect to learned men being under delusion, and to the knowledge of *karma* bringing about salvation, we may take it that the point is stated with a bit of exaggerated emphasis, in order to bestir attention, and rouse an interest in the subject.

17) कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥

कर्मणं	...	from karma
हि	...	indeed
अपि	...	also
बोद्धव्यं	...	is to be distinguished
बोद्धव्यं, च	...	and, is to be distinguished
विकर्मणः	...	from forbidden work
अकर्मणः	...	from non-work
च	...	and
बोद्धव्यं	...	is to be distinguished

गहना	...	difficult
कर्मणः	...	of karma
गतिः	...	is comprehension

“ Besides, *karma* is to be distinguished from *akarma* and *vikarma* : so is *vikarma* (forbidden action) to be distinguished from the rest, *akarma* is also to be distinguished. *Karma* is difficult of comprehension.”

Following the thread of karma being indispensable for true progress in the path of Release, the Lord proceeds to say that the distinction between *work*, *no work* and *mis-work* should be fully grasped. Each has to be understood not only by itself, but in such aspects as differentiate it from the rest. Intending *karmayogins* are particularly asked to do this, because they may not otherwise fully realize how difficult of comprehension and practical application is the philosophy of conduct.

The verse lends itself to an alternative rendering also. It means “*karma*, *vikarma*, and *akarma* proceed from *Me* (God). How it does so is a mystery which is hard to unravel.”

According to *vivriti*, the words कर्मणः, विकर्मणः and अकर्मणः are ablative nouns. They denote that from each of these the other two are to be distinguished. Other commentators take these words to be genitive, the meaning being that there is some truth to be known of *each*.

According to Ramanujacharya, अकर्म here also means *gnana* and *vikarma* means, not forbidden work, but varieties of work. कर्म means holy work alone. What is said to be difficult of comprehension is कर्म alone and not the other two. As already observed under the last verse, I cannot help thinking that the words विकर्म and अकर्म have been subjected to forced constructions. If कर्म means good work and विकर्म means varieties thereof, there is an implied tautology, because the latter word includes what is denoted by the former. Varieties of work comprehend good, bad, and indifferent, and in studying varieties of work, one can't help studying good work among others.

As कर्म is said to be hard of comprehension, the difficulty may well lie in its variety and there is no need to mention it by a separate expression. If कर्म and its conditions of variety (विकर्म) deserve express and separate mention, it is difficult to see why the varieties of (which is said to mean *gnana*) do not call for a similar mention. Surely, there are varieties in knowledge having regard to subject, object and other aspects. If the *karma* element of *karmayoga* be difficult of comprehension, its complement *gnana* is not less so. Why should the text pick out कर्म alone as ununderstandable? In fact, in the last verse, अकर्म was expressly said to be something as to which even the learned are bewildered.

Hence, it is far simpler and clearer to take कर्म, विकर्म, and अकर्म in their ordinary sense of *work, wrong work, and no work*. All the three have to be studied and understood by the practical philosopher and religionist. They are all related to one another and so dovetailed and interconnected as to be jointly comprehensible in the light of proper teachings and jointly incomprehensible in the absence of proper light. The difficulty of comprehension stated in the text relates, in fact, to all the three.

One may well be curious to know why Sri Krishna lays so much stress on this preface. Having once said that even the learned are bewildered on this theme, why does He repeat the idea again, that the subject is hard to grasp ? There must be significance in this.

Ordinarily, *karma* means action, motion, vibration, or exertion. It is divided into many sub-divisions by physicists.

Karma may denote the hoard of experiences which lie embedded somewhere in the soul or its sheaths, and produce births and deaths over and over again.

Karma is the sum total of duties and obligations – to be fulfilled every day or on occasions or for fruits.

Karma is good, bad, or indifferent, according as the predominant impulse is Satwa, Rajas or Tamas quality.

The statement then seems intelligible enough that among these divisions and sub-divisions, it is hard to pick out what is most beneficial to one's self in the right path. Sankarananda dilates in this direction and points out that sciences and scriptures are numberless, that teachers are many and that rules relating to time, place and qualifications, are countless, with ramifications connected with castes and Orders.

Having regard to the multiplicity and variety, the difficulty of comprehension stated in the text is quite correct, according to him. In spite of all these explanations, to make out a case of intricacy for the subject of *karma*, I think that the real clue to the meaning of Sri Krishna lies elsewhere. 'Even the learned are bewildered' and 'the subject is hard to grasp' are two strongly worded statements. Surely, secular distinctions among the divisions of *karma* are as not so subtle and puzzling as to elude the fine intellect of any learned person.

Sri Madhwa directs attention to an aspect which is suggestive of a satisfactory explanation. In his Tatparya, कर्मणः is taken as two distinct words कर्म+नः and any difficulties of grammar that an ordinary Sanskrit scholar may feel have been met in the annotations. नः means "from Us ; from God in His infinite Forms."

From this as a clue, we see that the incomprehensibility of *karma* arises from the incomprehen-

sibility of God. Karma is the same as Dharma in one of its many Lexicon meanings. Dharma is based on the Vedas and consists of true worship. He who understands God to any extent has understood 'worship' to that extent. Karma in its secular aspect may be mastered by scientific and ethical treatises. But *true karma* which is another name for Dharma chimes in with piety, sanctity, and Divine worship, and, in this sense, deserves to be described as incomprehensible.

For, we do not see why and how God is the author and regulator of every Dharma, and why man incurs sin although God is the creator and prompter of sin as of everything else. Along this line of thought, conundrums may be stated by hundreds, but further specification is superfluous.

In Chapter III, Bhagavata, Skandha XI, there is an important passage that throws light on this discussion. There we are told of a dialogue between king Nimi and his preceptor Avirhotra. Simi requests the preceptor to teach him karmayoga. He said :-

"Please teach me *karmayoga* by which, man is sanctified. I put this question to the Rishi-sons of Brahma, once upon a time, in the presence of their father. But they gave me no reply."

Avirhotra replied,

"*Karma, Akarma and Vikarma* are Vedic expressions and not secular terms. *Vedas are saturated with*

God, and hence, the wisest are bewildered therein. Vedas indulge in riddles and lay Karma itself as an antidote to *karma*. Every one should down fulfil the commands of the Vedas with self-conquest. If he takes to *Vikarma* which is forbidden action, he reaches the abode of death. He shall, on the other hand, carry out the injunctions of the Vedas, unselfishly and disinterestedly, and he is sure to attain to perfection thereby. The sordid fruits held out by the Vedas to the sacrificer are meant only as allurements."

This passage is very significant and quite in point. While the Geeta text says (verse 16) "even the learned are bewildered", and (verse 17) "karma is difficult of comprehension, "the passage above quoted uses the words "even pandits are deluded therein"; and what is their delusion about ? It is God. The quoted passage uses विकर्म and construes it as अधर्म = *forbidden action*.

This is as clear a commentary of that word as possible and furnishes a conclusive reply to Ramanujacharya's interpretation of that word.

It seems to me, therefore, that the strongly worded preface about कर्म being a great mystery, is justified, because in relation to God it is truly incomprehensible for the simple reason that God is a great mystery.

18) कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥

कर्मणि	...	in work
अकर्म	...	inaction
यः	...	whoever
पश्येत्	...	shall see
अकर्मणि	...	in inaction
च	...	and
कर्म	...	work
यः	...	whoever
सः	...	he
बुद्धिमान्	...	is wise
मनुष्येषु	...	among men
सः	...	he
युक्तः	...	is a yogin, a devotee
कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्	...	is a performer of all actions

“Whoever shall see inaction in doing work, and work during inaction, is wise among men, is a true devotee, and is a performer of all actions.”

The verse reads like a riddle, especially the first half-line. It is said that about 8,000 verses or more have been spotted in the Mahabharata, which convey no sense, if literally construed, and whose meaning lies deep. We are told that when Sri Badarayana requested Ganesha to be his scribe, the latter agreed on the condition that the verses were dictated to him without the least delay or intermission. Sri Badarayana, on his part, requested Ganesha

not to be a mechanical scribe but to understand the import of what was dictated to him before he proceeded to use the writing stile. The bargain being struck, Sri Badarayana took care to throw in a large sprinkling of riddle-like verses which puzzled Ganesha and reduced the speed of his stile.

By the verse which is our text, we are told that one ought to see कर्म in अकर्म and *vice versa*, and this is the great lesson for which our minds had been prepared by a strongly worded preface. The Lord had prepared the ground by telling us that the subject had puzzled the learned – and that the lesson, truly grasped, was a sure means of salvation. Expectation having been thus tickled, the lesson is ushered in at last and it turns out more or less a riddle. Commentators have differed very much from one another in trying to unearth the import.

Sri Madhwa's meaning is that when we fancy we are planning and doing, we are, in fact, idle puppets dancing to the tune of the Master, mere tools for the fulfillment of His purpose. Man proposes in vain, but the disposal rests with God. The wise devotee realizes this and sees how powerless he is to plan or carry out anything. God being the only independent Willer and Actor, the sage sees in human doings nothing but inaction (कर्मणि-अकर्म).

When we go to sleep and our senses including the mind lie quiescent, even then, God is awake, ever alert in His work. He creates the objects out of the

mind-stuff for the dreamer, and, in dreamless sleep, He keeps watch over the beats of the heart. The wise man sees God's activity in states of human inaction (अकर्मणि, कर्म).

Thus, whether we are wakeful or asleep, doing or indolent, God is ever wakeful and doing. This is the purport. However much we may try to understand this when we are told, we seldom realize it in practical application. Plunged in the battle of life, our blood is hot and fired by passion. We thrust aside God, and make out our plans and build our castles in the air. We succeed or fail, but neither success nor failure gives us peace and calm.

The mental ferment only increases in volume and intensity, and we are ever proceeding deeper into the raging struggles. Sri Krishna advises us never to throw Him into the background, but to keep Him always in the forefront. If the lesson is always remembered, the resulting peace of mind is immeasurably sweet. One who so realizes is a wise man among men. He is a true युक्त, practical philosopher. He is a कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्, one who does all, be his actual doings never so few.

For, the quantity of our work seldom counts as the quality does. The mental discipline of passionless work and unagitated duty guides the mind to God-vision. In the bliss of the goal, the aspirant realizes the fruit of all work, and infinitely more. He is more happy than if he had singly performed all the

rites and rituals of the entire Vedas and scriptures. By his Supreme happiness in the *Summum bonum*, he is greater than the greatest doer, by the rule of the little being merged in the great. To every man, there is nothing greater than the salvation of his soul, and, in this, the fullest measure of bliss of which he is capable, the fruit of all-embracing work is submerged as tiny and negligible.

In Geeta Tatparya, Sri Madhwa derives and explains कर्म to denote the Jeeva, in the sense of one who is bound by the law. अकर्म denotes God, He being above Law. The wise man sees no work in Jeeva (कर्मणि-अकर्म) but in अकर्म he sees all work (अकर्मणि-कर्म). The final purport of the interpretations in Bhashya and Tatparya is the same.

Ramanujacharya takes the word अकर्म to denote *gnana*. His view, as repeatedly stated already, is that we are being taught the two parts constituting *karmayoga*. We should fully understand the *karma* element as well as the *gnana* element of this compounded whole. The two parts are so intermingled that neither is of use or value without its complement. Hence, the wise man is asked to see *gnana* in *karma* and *karma* in *gnana*. Each is said to be the other in the sense that neither is complete in itself.

Reasons have been stated more than once why अकर्म in this context cannot stand for *Atma-gnana* (self-realization) and it is needless to repeat them.

Sankaracharya has a very long note on this verse. It consists of two parts, one devoted to an explanation of the verse as he understands it, and the other to a strong criticism of an older interpretation by Vrittikara.

According to Sankaracharya, action belongs wholly to the range and region of matter from the mind downwards to the grossest material substance. The soul is incapable of will, intellect, or feeling. It is therefore incompetent to act or direct work. The wise man is he who absolves the soul from any responsibility for, or connection with, the doings of the world (कर्मणि-अकर्म). The second quarter अकर्मणि-कर्म points to the nature of *inaction* which, in all its aspects properly analysed, resolves itself into some form of action. For example, the man who is still and silent is busy in mind. His muscles are held in tension. His eyes may be closed, but, by his volition, he keeps the lids in the posture desired. Hence, what is usually regarded as inaction is only a form of action.

This rendering is assented to by a majority of that school, coming, as it does, from the pen of their accredited leader. It seems to me that the meaning of the second quarter (अकर्मणिकर्म, action in inaction) is pointless. The purport of the verse is that the wise Monist sees the Atman dissociated from every trace of work and activity. He sees also that *Matter* including all its work is unreal. This helps him to realize the Unity of Atman and its solitary reality. For this end, the proposition of the first quarter that work

is but no work from the stand-point of self is all right. But where is the point or purpose in any one knowing that all forms of restraints are but modes of action? This is not self-realization in any sense. *Matter* has to be distinguished from the *spirit*. But there is no need to enter into the infinite ramifications and divisions of material objects, energies and operations, to find out whether there is action or not in certain states of fancied inaction.

Whether the correct designation for any particular material condition is 'action' or 'inaction' is of no significance at all, so long as all is Matter and should be brushed aside as false (मिथ्या). There is no object in knowing one kind of मिथ्या to be really another kind of मिथ्या, except, of course, as a curiosity of secular science. It seems to me, therefore, that this second *quarter* of the verse is almost fatal to the line of thought that the 'inaction' (अकर्म) spoken of in the verse is postulated with reference to the non-acting essence of the Self.

According to Sankaracharya, the first line freely translated will read thus :-

"Realize that the Spirit acts not, although the Body acts. See also that restraints too are but kinds of bodily action."

In this, it may be noted that there is no reference to the cosmos being a super-imposition on Brahman by illusion, or to Brahman being the sub-stratum

of the illusory superstructure. That Brahman is actionless is all that the verse directly speaks of, as Sankaracharya puts it.

In fear, possibly, of the difficulty in respect to the second quarter above pointed out, Madhusoodana and Sankarananda go far beyond their leader and make out the entire line to be an out and out exposition of the 'illusory super-imposition' theory so dear to the Monist. Madhusoodana takes कर्म in the sense of the grammarian's *object* or *accusative*. The world being the '*object*' of knowledge or experience, कर्म means the material world. Its antithesis अकर्म, therefore, means Brahman. Hence the text means, 'see the world in Brahman and Brahman in the world'. The relation being one of illusory super-imposition, in fact, the text calls on the knower to realize the falsity of the one and the reality of the other, on the analogy of the sanke-in-the-rope, or the silver-in-the-mother-of-pearl. Sankarananda, too, adopts the same interpretation.

In their zeal to see the monistic माया set out almost in every verse of the Geeta, these two commentators have evidently overshot the mark in construing कर्म and अकर्म of the text. At any rate, Neelakanta and Utkarsha Deepika think so, two prominent brethren of the same school of thought. These point out that कर्म in the grammarian's technical sense of '*object*' is no authority for the position that the word denotes "the material world." A merely technical name useful for a special science for

mnemonic or other purposes is hardly of any use for construing that word in general literature. Moreover, the theory of illusory super-imposition, is, it is pointed out by the said critics, out of place in this context. For, verse No.15 began by saying '*perform actions*' (कुरु कर्म). Verse No.16 promised to expound कर्म (work or duty) as it was a puzzle even to the learned. Verse 17 said कर्म, विकर्म and अकर्म had to be distinguished from one another, and there was truth to be known about each.

Having thus prepared the ground, the Lord states the nature of कर्म and अकर्म. While the same words used in verses 15, 16 and 17, bore the ordinary signification, it is certainly doing violence to the context and quite out of tune with it, to construe कर्म to mean the Universe and अकर्म to mean the Brahman on which the cosmos rests like the mirage. Such a lesson has nothing to do with the injunction, 'Perform work, I will tell you all about it.' This is Neelakanta's criticism, and the author of Utkarsha fully concurs therein.

While these (Madhusoodana and Sankarananda) dart off to interpret the verse with reference to the bed-rock of Monism, viz., 'illusory super-imposition,' others of the same school climb down to a lower key and understand the words कर्म and अकर्म in a more modest sense. Among these, Neelakanta and Sridhara requires special notice.

Neelakanta's note is long and he interprets the verse in 2 or 3 different ways. He quotes Sankaracharya and tenders him an apology for venturing on his own interpretation. The following is a summary of his view.

(a) See अकर्म in कर्म ; because actions sanctioned or forbidden by secular ethics turn out the very reverse thereof in the light of the Shastras. For example, Vedic sacrifices if performed without due faith are better not done at all. They are कर्म , but tantamount to inaction (अकर्म) . A man in deep devotion fails to do Sandhyavandanam in proper time. He is guilty of inaction. But the exemption given by the Shastras converts his अकर्म into कर्म , he deriving proper fruit as if he did कर्म in the proper time.

Injury to animal life is a sin, broadly speaking. But the tender priest kills the victim in sacrifices, and hence विकर्म is कर्म in this instance.

Thus the wise man is called upon to see in कर्म, अकर्म and विकर्म i.e., just the reverse of it in the light of the Shastras.

(b) 'See अकर्म in कर्म; अकर्म is Brahman, the absolute and actionless. In it, see कर्म the world of energy and action. Know that the latter rests in the former, in the sense that the world is upheld by Brahman or is materially composed of Brahman or super-imposed by illusion on Brahman.

The objections to Neelakanta's view are easily stated. In the first quarter, he takes कर्म to comprehend all the three aspects, viz., कर्म, अकर्म and विकर्म. Assuming he may do so, he goes on to say that everyone of these turns out the very reverse of it, in the light of the Shastras. It is difficult to follow this. It is not necessary, nor invariably true, that secular ethics is so radically at variance with scriptures. They may conceivably be in accord also. There is nothing in the text to show that कर्म should be understood in the restricted meaning of "कर्म as judged by secular stand-points," and अकर्म similarly restricted to mean "अकर्म as judged by the Shastras".

As to the second quarter, Neelakanta seems to forget himself a bit. He himself criticized Madhusoodana with force that, in this context relating to the performance of work, a reference to the theory of basic illusion and super-imposition was out of place. In apparent self-contradiction, he drifts, unconsciously as it were, into that very strain and construes अकर्म to mean Brahman and कर्म to stand for the world.

Sridhara reads the verse in a plain and simple theistic sense. कर्म dedicated to God is अकर्म, because it is not of a binding character, entails no sin, and carries no penalties such as perpetuating Samsara. In अकर्म, non-performance of duty, one has to see sin (कर्म). Sridhara gives this as an alternative render-

ing, after adopting Sankaracharya's interpretation as another admissible meaning.

There is evidently a feeling of dissatisfaction among this circle that the tenet of Universal unreality is out of place here. Hence dissenting expositions are largely in evidence under this verse. Madhusoodana offers two interpretations. Both differ from Sankaracharya's. Sankarananda offers two. One is different from Sankaracharya's. Neelakanta offers two, both of which differ from the leader's. It is only Anandagiri and Utkarsha Deepika, that stand firmly by Sankara Bhashya, and this is no wonder, because both of them are only commentaries of Sankaracharya's commentary.

We may try, for the sake of convenience, to sum up the views in a few words.

(i) Sri Madhwa sees the hand of God in every movement and work of man, and even when he is indolent, inactive, or asleep.

(ii) Sridhara points out that all work is binding or sinful, unless it is dedicated to God as His worship.

(iii) Neelakanta calls on us to judge actions by the light of scriptures alone and determine कर्म, विकर्म, and अकर्म

(iv) Sankaracharya points out that action is within the exclusive jurisdiction of matter and is false, and that the Atman has nothing to do with it ; He

adds that the so-called inactions or restraints are but actions in the last resort.

(v) Sankarananda and Madhusoodana take the verse as an exposition, plain and simple, of the theory that the world is a mirage, and that it is super-imposed on Brahman by illusion ; see Brahman in the world and *vice versa* too.

(vi) Ramanujacharya thinks that कर्म and अकर्म are not in antithesis at all, that अकर्म is the *gnana* part of *karmayoga*, and that both are in harmony working shoulder to shoulder in *karmayoga*.

In this summary, I have not yet noticed the view of Vrittikara which is set out at great length in Sankara Bhashya and strongly criticized. Vrittikara says that कर्मणि refers to the obligatory duties of each caste and order, and these are अकर्म because they are holy and pious and bring on no penalties. अकर्मणि is non-performance of those duties and they are कर्म in truth, because they are binding and sinful. Thus the lesson taught is, 'Do duties and fail not'. To a large extent, this interpretation is accepted by Madhusoodana in one of his renderings and by Sridhara also. Sankaracharya's criticism of Vrittikara is based on three chief grounds.

(1) The knowledge that कर्म is अकर्म and *vice versa*, is praised in the Geeta to be *emancipating* in efficacy. But the knowledge of obligatory duties being unbind-

ing and sinless, and the knowledge of the converse being sinful, is not emancipator. (2) Mere omission to do obligatory duties cannot bring on sin. Non-doing being an unreality like the hare's horn, cannot produce a positive result like sin. (3) If Sri Krishna meant to say, "Duty is good and omission is sinful," why should He not say so clearly and unambiguously by suitable words ?

(1) None of these objections seems to be weighty. No doubt, the knowledge of Brahman or Unity is alone emancipatory. But surely, there are numberless grades of preparation for that stage. Duties must be known and performed for the sake of mental purity and spiritual progress. Hence a knowledge of नित्यकर्म being meritorious is certainly a necessary equipment of the spiritual pilgrim.

(2) The argument that failure to do duty cannot be sinful is weak. In scriptural literature, अभाव is not असत् like the hare's horn. Texts in plenty may be cited to show that wrongful omissions are sinful, and this agrees with common-sense. Madhusoodana splits hairs when he tries to make out that, if a man fails to do Sandhyavandana at 6 A.M., as he ought to do, it is not *omission* that produces sin but *whatever positive thing* he chances to be doing at that time. After all, it is scriptures that should tell us what is sinful and what is not, and any reason imported from material sciences to the effect that a negative cannot produce a positive is out of place in such a matter.

(3) Why should the verse run as it is, instead of being plainer and clearer ? This is a piece of criticism that applies to all the commentaries of this verse. The language is obviously enigmatic, and there is no commentary thereof that can make sense out of it without a free supply of ellipses. Sankaracharya's annotation is no exception in this respect. There is no word for Brahman in the verse plainly understood. Sankaracharya's meaning of the first quarter is that Brahman is actionless.

The reader will see the same need for supplying ellipses in other renderings also. The fact of the matter seems to be that it is a versified riddle, and the key has to be found from established truths and collateral literature. I have dealt with the controversy between Sankaracharya and Vrittikara merely as an onlooker. I am not to be understood as upholding the interpretation of Vrittikara as the proper one here. I think, however, that it is not open to the sort of attack directed against it.

The sentiments are by no means wrong or unsound. But the verse does not seem intended to convey the somewhat tame lesson that obligatory duties are meritorious and failure to perform them is sinful. Sri Krishna would not have dilated on the difficulty of the theme and its inscrutability, if He had meant no more. Hence, Sri Madhwa connects the subject of कर्म with the theory of Divine dispensations. *These verily are inscrutable.*

It remains to notice a short tirade of Venkatanatha against Sri Madhwa. The critic calls our interpretation तुच्छ (despicable). He quotes Sri Madhwa's Bhashya which says, "When doing कर्म, one who sees that he is really no doer, being but a reflection of God and all work being in fact attributable to Vishnu, is a wise man." This is absurd in his opinion, (1) because अकर्म means 'non-doing' and should not be construed to mean the doing of Vishnu, the context requiring a single meaning through-out; (2) because Vishnu Himself is no doer, as Sri Krishna said in verse No.13, chapter IV.

As to these two points, it may be seen that Venkatanatha's imagination has evidently played him a trick in causing the belief that we have construed अकर्म to mean Vishnu's karma. Sri Madhwa's words show, on the other hand, that he interprets अकर्म to mean non-performance, as the context shows and requires, and that the statement relating to all work being the work of Vishnu is added only by way of explanation. The second point, that God Himself is actionless in truth, has been met under verse 13 which this critic claims to be the trumpet of victory for the Monist. If God does not act, who does ? If He is not the efficient cause of all causes, who is ? The theory that work proceeds wholly from inanimate matter and that man is not in any sense a being responsible to God, is subversive of religion – Let this suffice for the present.

Going to the 2nd line of the Geeta Verse under notice, we see three words of praise applied to the seer. He is wise (बुद्धिमान्). He is a practical philosopher युक्तः. He is an "all-performer." (कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्). No doubt, every man has बुद्धि (reason); but बुद्धिमान् here means endowed with high wisdom.

The last eulogy that the seer is an *all-performer* calls for explanation. No man can exhaust the entire list of what should be performed. But the seer who does whatever he can in the right spirit of selfless humility and Divine dedication, is virtually "an all-performer". When, by his limited performance and correct devotion, he reaches the goal, the reward of bliss that waits for him is perfect and surpasses the reward allotted to all Vedic actions put together. The rule is that the greater includes the less. By attaining to Mukti, all the lower ends attainable by the performance of innumerable sacrifices are virtually attained, and more.

Sridhara concurs in this explanation of the difficult word. He quotes verse No.46 of chapter II in support of the rule of merger above pointed out. He suggests an alternative exposition also. कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् means "whatever action he may do," the idea being that the seer has fairly crossed the limitation of the rules and regulations of conduct that fetter lesser mortals and that even the conscious or unconscious commission of faults, errors and mistakes, do not affect him.

Sankarananda offers two explanations : (1) The seer destroys with the sword of *Atma Gnana* the

accumulated hoard of karma, some of which have started bearing fruit and others wait to produce Samsaric results in the infinite future. (कृत् - cutter).

(2) The seer having visioned the Self and realized 'Unity', is the enjoyer not alone of his own goal but of the fruits derived by everyone of the countless workers in the world. He is one with all, and all works are his. This, however, is an adwaitic conundrum, of which, space forbids an immediate discussion.

Neelakanta has a long note on the second line, too, of this verse. His view stands thus :-

A. The verse must be split up into several distinct predications. The wise man among men (बुद्धिमान्) is one individual. The युक्त is quite another. If any one combine these two qualifications in himself, then he is an 'all-doer' (कृत्सकर्मकृत्). Taking parts of the first line along with parts of the second, the predications stand thus : (1) one who sees अकर्म in कर्म, i.e., who judges *Karma*, *Akarma* and *Vikarma* as the reverse of each in the light of the Shastras is a wise man among men (बुद्धिमान्) ; (2) one who sees the world as a mirage resting on Brahman (अकर्मणिकर्म) is a युक्त.

By the force of the cumulative particle च (and) in the first line, Nos., 1 and 2 combined constitute the redeemed sage known as an 'all-doer'. The combination of the two qualifications is, in his view, important. Each by itself is not efficient. The two

together make up the mature sage of wisdom. Mantra 11 of Isavasya lays down that the seeker should combine विद्या and अविद्या meaning *gnana* and *karma*.

To this effect is one of the two explanations he propounds. The other one is to the following effect:-

B. बुद्धिमान्, युक्तः and कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् are three distinct successive grades. (1) Those who see karma as identical with Brahman and see everything as Atman are at the top. They are known as “all-doers” (कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्) the emancipated sages. (2) (a). Those who worship subtle matter in the causal state and secure absorption therein for prolonged periods akin to eternity, are Seers of the unmanifest. They plunge into this sleep of unconsciousness and are blessed in a sense. (b). Then again, there are others who worship the ‘Manifest’ and secure high material gains. These two groups of *Prakriti-worshippers* are referred to in the geeta as युक्त. They are the persons referred to in Mantra No.14 of Isavasyopanishad as worshippers of असंभूति and संभूति. (3) Those who are still lower in the scale realize not Prakriti by self-experience and direct vision, but understand karma in its true light as a matter of book-learning. These are referred to in the Geeta as wise among men (स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु).

These two expositions of Neelakanta defy criticism by their technical elaboration. But a few points are still worthy of note.

Let me take the explanation marked 'A' *supra*. Neelakanta relies on the Mantra No.11 of the Upanishad where अविद्या and विद्या are spoken of. Unfortunately, the Advaitic interpretation of the Mantra throws no light at all on the present question. For, according to Sankara Bhashya, it means, "One who knows and follows अविद्या goes to Pitriloka. One who knows and follows विद्या goes to Devaloka." In Neelakanta's view, the बुद्धिमान् who sees *karma* to be its opposite by the light of the Shastras, is the विद्यावान् of the Mantra. One who sees कर्म in अकर्म (the world in Brahman) and is known as युक्त corresponds, therefore, to the man of अविद्या spoken of in the Mantra. Surely, no Monist will tolerate this, for, it is derogatory to the man that has versioned the illusory character of the world resting in Brahman like a mirage, to speak of him as a mercenary doer of *karma* whose goal is no higher than Pitriloka. While Mantra says that विद्या and अविद्या lead to blinding darkness (अंधं तमः), the Geeta lavishes praise on the individuals and calls them बुद्धिमान् and युक्त. If कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् stands for the emancipated sage, it is difficult to see how two such kinds of selfishness whose goals are Pitriloka and Devaloka respectively can combinedly to produce such a sage. Two blacks can never make a white. Advaitins are particularly opposed to the tenet that the combination of *gnana* and *karma* leads to Mukti. To them, *karma* is a deadly foe of *gnana*. Neelakanta is ingenious and original in playing duck and drake with the

various parts of the verse and evolving distinct predications by the permutation and combination of such words as he wants, to bring out some idea of his own.

In the explanation marked 'B', he relies on Mantra 14 of the Upanishad. Worshippers of *Prakriti* in her Unmanifest and Manifest Forms are supposed to be the persons spoken of there. They worship *Prakriti* for various ends lower than emancipation. What is there in the Geeta verse to denote the Unmanifest and Manifest Forms are supposed to be the persons spoken of there. They worship *Prakriti* for various ends lower than emancipation. What is there in the Geeta verse to denote the Unmanifest or the Manifest, or the rewards expected of each ?

The word युक्त can hardly convey and signify all this elaborate story, nor the first and second quarter of the first line. Whether the exposition of the matter dealing with divisions and sub-divisions of *Prakriti*-worshippers is sound or not, is another matter. Whether the Mantra No.14 of the Upanishad has been correctly understood by the Adwaitic commentators is also another matter. It is enough for the present purpose, that on no data furnished by the language of the Geeta, a huge edifice has been built; and this crumbles, the moment we examine the foundation.

Reading the verse over again, I cannot help thinking that the eulogy of the seer as a wise man, as a युक्त, and as an all-performer, applies jointly to

the single individual that is spoken of in the first line as the seer.

Keeping all the commentaries aside, and looking at the verse in the light of mere common-sense, it is not impossible to take the view that the verse belauds a life of self-less love and service. In the midst of 'work' we may see 'no-work' as Janaka is said to have done.

Janaka was a king and house-holder. In the midst of 'no-work', as the ascetic founders of Indian Philosophy were, men may devote themselves to love and service, and act as beacon-lights of instruction and guidance to their own generation and posterity. 'Work' stands for worldly avocations such as the house-holder engages in, and 'no-work' refers to the life of Renunciation such as befits the ascetic (Sanyasin). Each of these serves society by taking note of that aspect which is apparently alien to the life he has adopted, and sanctifying his 'work' or 'no-work' as the case may be, by unselfish love and service. Professor Rangachariar interprets the verse on these lines and sees in it an appreciation and recommendation of the Altruism that fired Janaka and the ascetics of old.

19) यस्य सर्वे समारंभाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥

यस्य	...	Whose
सर्वे	...	all

समारंभाः	...	undertakings
कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः...		free from selfishness and egotism
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं...		whose actions are burnt by the fire of knowledge
तं	...	him
आहुः	...	they call
पण्डितं	...	a wise person
बुधाः	...	learned men

“Whose undertakings are all free from selfishness and egotism and whose actions are chastened by the fire of knowledge, *him*, learned men have called a wise person.”

Five verses, commencing with this, form a bunch dealing with the indispensable necessity of relinquishing passions and longings. The last verse taught us that men have no independence at all in the matter of work and that God directs all. A grasp of this fundamental truth cools the ardour of passion and the ebullitions of self-assertion. The longing desire for the fruits of work is checked and subdued, and the aggressive self-assertion which marks and mars the doings of the egotist disappears. A firm belief in God's independence and our absolute dependence on Him, is true worship. This is one element of *Karmayoga*. Relinquishment of the desire for fruit and absence of self-assertive resolves to achieve this, that, and what not, constitute another element. This

latter is examined in various aspects by the present verse and the four succeeding ones.

Some commentators take verse 24 also within this bunch. (*Vide* Neelakanta). Sri Madhwa excludes it as bearing on a different subject. Sridhara is also of the same opinion.

The distinction between the seeker who is equipping himself with instruction and knowledge, and one who has transcended the limitations of book-learning by God-vision, is well-known. The doubt is whether the verse under comment relates to the former or to the latter. Sankaracharya interprets it so as to be applicable only to the sage of achieved self-realization. He thinks that such a sage alone is competent to renounce कर्म and संकल्प. It is he whose *karma* is burnt up by the fire of knowledge. If he works at all, he does so either to keep body and soul together till his time arrives to cast off the mortal coil, or to serve as a guide of the world; for, he has no purpose or benefit to aim at or achieve for himself, and has no need to undertake any task except for the two purposes just noticed. Sankarananda and Madhusoodana adopt the same line of thought. Madhusoodana even quotes the Brahma Sootra that speaks of past karma being consumed by the Realization of the Sage and the seeds of future births also becoming barren. (संचित and आगामि).

Sridhara and Venkatanath observe that the verse might very well apply to the seeker as well as the sage, and interpret the expressions accordingly.

कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः and ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं are two somewhat difficult words in this verse, which call for a brief notice. All are agreed that काम here is the desire for fruit. As for संकल्प, it has been variously understood with reference to the varying shades of thought which underlie therein, or which etymology may suggest.

Every effort presupposes (1) a will and (2) a conscious intention to work for the end desired. We wish for a benefit and resolve, "we will achieve the end by doing so and so." The wish is known as काम. The resolution "I shall do so and so" is संकल्प. The wise man in question gives up the desire for fruit. He yearns not. He sets not his heart on the benefit and gives up काम. He also gives up संकल्प by not arrogating to himself power to do and achieve. He does not commit the mistake of fancying himself to be a free doer, and of taking any scheme or work as under *his* own disposal.

He does not deem it possible that he can wrench the fruit by the ways and means he can adopt. It is man alone that looks far ahead before he undertakes work, and worries himself through greed and egotism into agitations of far-seeing hope and fear. Animals fortunately are not subject to this agitation, They work purely on instincts. Their world is in appetites and the movements necessary to gratify the same for the moment. But the distinction between the equanimity of the animal and of the wise man is clear. The former arises from mental darkness. The

latter is the result of philosophy – a faith in God and an intelligent conviction of human limitations.

काम and संकल्प as explained above, go together, being intimately related to each other, acting and re-acting in turn. Wish is the parent of thought and thought is the parent of wish. Sankaracharya construes संकल्प here as the egotistic thought of achieving, that gives birth to the wish. Sankarananda thinks that संकल्प denotes the mental idea of the end in view being desirable and beneficial. Unless such an idea is born, there can be no wish addressed to it and no effort is possible in that direction.

Ramanujacharya thinks that संकल्प here does not denote any of these ideas. No doubt, a conscious intention is a necessary prelude to any effort. But that is not to be relinquished at all, for, without it, no work or effort is possible. The Geeta speaks of work without संकल्प; hence the word must refer to some other notion without which work is a physical possibility. Etymology is requisitioned by Desikar to make out that संकल्प here means the *delusion of mistaking the body for the soul*.

That this delusion is abundantly prevalent cannot be gainsaid. The materialist is a glaring proof of the same. Without going so far as to accept materialism as our creed, we often speak of ourselves as stout or thin, short or tall, fair or dark. These are attributes not of the soul but of the body. The wise

man, as Ramanujacharya puts it, abandons Desire of Fruit (काम), and further, mistakes not his body for the soul. A knowledge of the truth that the Body and the Soul are quite distinct from each other, burns up the hoard of past *karma* for the knower.

It appears to me that the etymological derivation of संकल्प has led to a wrong interpretation of संकल्प as set out in this context. We should not forget that the subject on hand is *karma* and its cognate aspects. The truth as to the Body not being the soul belongs to सांख्य and this is alien to the discussion on hand.

The word काम used with संकल्प is a sure indication that some mental attitude relating to work is contemplated. The only objection urged by Desikar to a literal interpretation of the word संकल्प is that, as no work is possible without a preceding consciousness and intention, संकल्प cannot possibly refer to it. To this objection, the answer is clear and easy. It is not the indispensable intention preceding every act that is condemned, but the egotistic feeling that one is a free agent. Without this kind of egotism, one may very well undertake work in a devotional spirit of humility, and there is no psychological inconsistency in this position as feared by Desikar.

Then again, it is startling to find it stated that a belief in the soul as being distinct from the body, is such *gnana* as can burn up for us the hoard of past *karma*. Ramanujacharya, it may be remembered

in this connection, does not accept the creed of the *Atman* being single and all-pervasive. He does not believe in the *Atman* being identical with Brahman. He puts forward *Prapatti* with the greatest reverence as an essential means of salvation. *Prapatti* is surrender unto Vishnu. This being so, how comes it that the belief of the body being distinct from the soul can burn up past *karma*, a result which *Prapatti* alone can accomplish.

Moreover, the last verse taught us, according to this commentator, that *karma* was, in a sense, convertible into *gnana* and *vice versa*. He adds that the present verse is meant to explain how such a position is sound. I fail to see how the distinctness of the Soul and the Body furnishes any reason for the position that *gnana* and *karma* are, in a sense, convertible terms. If anything, it may enable us to see the converse.

The word ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं may, next, be noticed. The school of Sankaracharya understand by 'ज्ञान' in this compound word, the conviction of the world's unreality (मिथ्यात्व). This is very far-fetched and is inadmissible for other obvious reasons also.

ज्ञान is further held by them to be the self-realization that emancipates the knower. In this sense, कर्म which is destroyed by the fire of knowledge denotes the load of past *karma* which is described in Chandogya Upanishad as a mountain of cotton fiber which, if ignited, is consumed in an instantaneous flash.

As already observed, the difficulty is not clear why ज्ञान and कर्म in this compound word may not be read in a more modest sense. ज्ञान is wisdom or knowledge, not necessarily the state of supra-consciousness known as God-vision (अपरोक्ष). कर्म in reference to the ordinary knower, is the sum of his actual and present doings and undertakings—not the *karma* of past births which is spoken of in the Upanishad.

The consumption by fire, referred to, is, of course, figurative and denotes the piety and sanctity attaching to the work of this practical philosopher. What he undertakes is a kind of Divine Worship, because he is ever conscious of his own limitations and of the Divine Hand everywhere at work. Thus understood, the difficult words कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः and ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं, bring out a clear sense, as applied to the karmayogin who is yet a seeker in the path.

20) त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥

त्यक्त्वा	...	Giving up
कर्मफलासङ्गं	...	concern in work and fruit
नित्यतृप्तः	...	ever contented
निराश्रयः	...	dependent on none
कर्मणि	...	in work
अभिप्रवृत्तः	...	engaged

अपि	...	though
न	...	not
एव	...	at all
किञ्चित्	...	anything
करोति	...	does
सः	...	he

“Giving up anxiety in respect of work and fruits, ever contented and self-relying, he does no work at all although engaged in work.”

We were asked in the last verse to give up egotism and greed, as neither the end nor the means of any undertaking is at our disposal. That idea is continued now by the statement that we should abandon concern in respect of work and fruit. The perturbed mind worried over the ways and means of an undertaking, and worried also over the final result, finds no contentment anywhere at any time. Such a man is ever unhappy, because, he is ever dependent on other men and things for necessities, comforts, or luxuries. His is not a self-contented disposition and his mind never knows peace, by reason of his yearnings and cares to grasp some pleasure or reach some imaginary good. The wise man, on the other hand, commands his own happiness, as all the elements of a truly happy life are present in his own soul and mind, and he has no need to look outside of himself for any source of joy or pleasure, nor depend on others for help. He is ever engaged in pious work, but, being free from the fever of concern and anxiety, is virtually unengaged in work.

Absolute bliss and self-contained perfection belong, however, in an unlimited degree, to the Supreme Being alone. But Jeevas are reflections of that Being, man being but an image of the Maker. In our spiritual composition, we are *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda* in essence. We are similar to God in these respects, although we are but atoms of littleness compared with His infinite Greatness. The wise man feels contented and self-reliant in the consciousness that he is a reflected image of the Maker and that he need look to nothing and rely on none but himself and his Maker for any blessing or benefit. Sri Madhwa construes नित्यतृप्तः and निराश्रयः on these lines and thinks that the wise man derives his joy and peace from this consciousness.

The riddle-like statement in verse No.18 relating to one who sees action in inaction is being slowly explained and elucidated. It was variously understood by commentators. Sri Madhwa explained it on the footing of man's dependence on God for all his energy, strength and activity. Sankaras explained it on the footing of action being within the province of Matter only, and being unreal on that account. Ramanujacharya explained it on the footing that *karma* and *gnana* were, in a sense, synonymous. Which one of these truly represents Sri Krishna's meaning is a mystery.

After verse No. 18, came No. 19 in which the wise man in question is again described as one who gave up longing and egotism. His dispassion was said

to burn up the bad effects of work. This shows that it is not the man who takes the world of work as unreal that is the hero of the theme, but the passionless worker. Then comes the verse under comment, No. 20. It follows in the same strain, stress being again laid on the desirability of renouncing greed and egotism.

This, therefore, seems the true meaning of *no-work in work* as the second line clearly states it.

The expressions कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः and त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासंगं seem almost identical in sense. Nice shades based on the different words employed have led Sreenivasa Theertha and Krishnacharya (two commentators of Jaya Theertha's Prameya Deepika) to differ a little from each other. But the discussion being somewhat linguistic, the reader is referred to the Sanskrit exposition. It may, however, be pointed out that there are two kinds of egotism which sway the minds of men. The pride and boast of one's capacity, skill, cleverness and superiority, is one kind. The feeling that one is the sole undisputed master of possessions such as wealth, lands, goods, slaves, servants, agents, and so on, is another kind of self-complacency, although this is not quite dissimilar to the former. In Sanskrit, they call these कर्तृत्वभ्रम and स्वामित्वभ्रम respectively. Krishnacharya points out that whereas verse 19 dealt with the former kind of delusion, the present verse draws attention to the latter.

The school of Sankaracharya seem to insist that these verses speak of the seer who has attained to perfection. Such a man is more or less an automaton of self-absorbed meditation. He aims at nothing and wishes for nothing. He may gratify appetites, but, as for plans and doings, he is not a being of reason at all. He may at times work simply to set an example, but there is no Zest or Zeal about it.

In construing verse after verse in this strain on the footing that the hero in question regards work as unreal and engages in no-work, in truth, one is rather puzzled to see the language of the text as it is worded. Why not Sri Krishna tell us somewhere that कर्म is मिथ्या if that is the chorus of the song ? To say that A works in dispassion and is therefore no worker is very different from stating that A looks upon the world, and work also among the things of the world, as false like silver-in-the-mother-of-pearl.

In the present verse, the expressions नित्यतृप्त, *ever satisfied*, and निराश्रयः, *non-dependent*, are supposed to indicate the seer of accomplished salvation. But why these expressions are inapplicable to the spiritual aspirant as distinguished from the perfect sage, it is not easy to understand. The *karmayogin* derives bliss, satisfaction, contentment and mental peace, from a relinquishment of love and hate, passions and prejudice. So, he relies on himself and on God for all and every blessing.

Sridhara and Venkatanath did, in fact, as already pointed out, construe the last verse as applicable to the seeker as well as the sage. In confining this and other verses to the *perfect* sage, the value of a great lesson that would otherwise inspire and illumine the life of ordinary people who are mere seekers of wisdom would be lost. It is so inspiring and elevating to every one of us that we should endeavour to be 'non-doers', although steeped ever so fully and busily in work. We should be *in* the world engaged in the thickest of its fights, struggles and scrambles, and yet be not *of* the world in the sense of being a plaything and a victim of its forces.

Turning to the verse, let me briefly sum up once again the standpoints of the three schools :-

(i) Ramanujacharya thinks that the plentiful doer of work is in fact a 'non-doer' and is really plunged only in *gnana*, because he has understood the soul's essence and characteristics and derives joy from the soul.

(ii) Sankaracharya thinks that the Monist who has visioned the Atman and experienced its solitary reality and grandeur is, in truth, 'no doer', although a deluded world may think he is engaged in work.

(iii) Sri Madhwa thinks that the verse speaks of the doer who is conscious of his dependence on God and undertakes work in pious humility, ever regarding himself as but an instrument to carry out His Will and Purpose.

21) निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः। शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥

निराशीः	...	desireless
यतचित्तात्मा	...	of restrained memory and mind
त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः	...	of relinquished attachment
शारीरं	...	bodily
केवलं	...	merely
कर्म	...	work
कुर्वन्	...	doing
न	...	not
आप्नोति	...	gets into
किल्बिषं	...	Samsara (bondage)

“Being desireless, of restrained memory and mind, and of relinquished attachment, and doing merely bodily work, he does not get into Samsara.”

Verse after verse harps on the verbal antithesis of *‘the doer’* being *‘non-doer’*, and reconciles the apparent inconsistency by pointing out that *‘no-work’* means not physical inaction but mental purity. We were asked (verse 19) to give up काम (desire) and संकल्प (egotism). To these, was added आसंग which is a kind of vanity. It was expressly said that, if these were given up, *the doer was no doer*.

In continuing the same lesson, the present verse tells us, by what means or steps, attachment, egotism, and vanity, could be prevented or relinquished.

Among the three epithets of the first line, the first and the third are mere statements, in other words, of काम, संकल्प and आसंग. 'निराशीः' desireless, re-states renunciation of Kama ; त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः repeats the abandonment of egotism in all its aspects. The 2nd epithet यतचित्तात्मा, however, is meant to tell us, the means or step by which we may, in due course, get rid of काम, संकल्प and आसंग, or to use the expressions of the verse, आशा and परिग्रह which denote the same ideas. चित्त denotes the faculty of memory and आत्मा stands for cognition.

It may be remembered that

(मनस्) Manas	... cognition
(बुद्धि) Buddhi	... reason
(अहंकार) Ahankara	... 'I' ness
(चित्त) Chitta	... memory
(चेतन) Chetana	... consciousness

are divisions of the mental faculty, sometimes spoken of collectively too by the word मन : Mind. The Geeta word यतचित्तात्मा stands for the restraint of memory and of cognition. It is easy enough to construe चित्त

as mind and आत्मा as body. But the point is that a due restraint of mental faculties alone renders it possible to renounce काम and its allies, for these are but further developments in mental operation. One who has a short memory for pleasures does not harbour them long in his mind. He casts not a longing look at them, and his eagerness to secure them again is subdued in vigour and short-lived in time. One whose cognition of experiences is restrained, largely reduces the range of temptations that seek to entrap him. Thus चित्त and आत्मा held in subjugation helps us to renounce desire, egotism and vanity.

As observed already, it is easy to construe आत्मा to denote the body and the external senses as all the commentators of the Sankara school have done. But Sri Madhwa prefers to take चित्त as well as आत्मा as standing for mental faculties alone. In this, Ramanujacharya agrees with him. The reason for taking them so, is that the control of external activities is of no special value, if the mind is allowed freedom to roam about.

Verses 5 and 6, Chapter III, told us that complete inaction was an impossibility, and that he who controls the organs of action alone, with his mind free to dwell on pleasures, is a hypocrite. Thus, relatively speaking, mental control is indispensable for the renunciation of desire, egotism and vanity. Moreover, the entire teaching proceeds on two postulates – that the body is busy doing, and the man is yet a non-

doer. So restraint of bodily activity is not and cannot be in contemplation, for, that would destroy the whole point.

The object is to prevail upon Arjuna and others circumstanced like him, to plunge deeply into action and give free play to physical energies. To such a man, the antidote for preventing contamination is pointed out to lie in mental control. The second line of the text says that, although such a man does bodily work, he does not incur the penalties of *Samsara*, because his activity is *merely* (केवलं) bodily. The force of 'merely' lies in the fact that his mind is under check, and that desire, egotism and vanity, have been exiled.

It may be observed that the main proposition of the teaching is that "he is a doer and yet, no doer". To prevent any misapprehension that this repeated antithesis may lead to, Sri Krishna changes the language in the last quarter of the verse under notice. "कुर्वन्नाप्नोतिकिल्बिषं". किल्बिषं is literally *sin* or *penalty*. The change in the language is significant and shows that Sri Krishna meant by the paradox of one being a doer and no-doer, no more than that, though he is a doer, he incurs not the incidental penalties of work, if his mind be pure as stated. This furnishes an answer to the view of the Sankara school, that *doing* and *non-doing* should be reconciled only on the hypothesis that 'doing' is a mirage-like myth and non-doing alone is real.

I have already noticed, at some length, the divergence among the members of the Advaitic school

as to whether these verses from No.18 onwards, deal with the sage or the seeker or both. Sridhara and Venkatanath construe all of them as applicable to both. The rest think that the sage who has achieved Self-Realization is the only person contemplated. In bringing out the logical sequence, and trying to answer redundancies, they say that such a sage may do worldly work for two reasons. (a) He may behave in every respect like other people, undertake sacrifices and do the rites and ceremonies enjoined for his caste and order, though aiming at no benefit for himself.

He does all this simply to set an example to the world and guide society. He is at the same time working out his own Prarabdha Karma. (b) But the sage who has no Prarabdha to tackle thus, simply bides his time to throw off the body, and in the meantime does only just what is necessary to sustain life and no more. According to Sankaracharya, the sage engaged in either of these two ways was spoken of in verse 19. The one described above under (a) is contemplated by verse 20. The present deals with (b).

It is pointed out that the present verse speaks only of the Sanyasin (a person of the fourth Order यति) whose entire range of activity is limited to a little mendicancy to keep up the flame of life. In construing the verse as a description of the Sanyasin, परिग्रह is taken to denote 'the wife', and शरीरं कर्म to mean what is necessary just to sustain the body. It is difficult to see the cogency of all this.

There is no indication in the text that it is the sage alone that is the subject of reference. As pointed out, Sridhara and Venkatanath explain the verses as applicable to the seeker and the sage. There is further no clue here to show that the sage engaged in plenty of activity for setting an example is distinguished, for any reason, from the one whose work is limited to mendicancy. Such a distinction is of no particular use and does not advance the argument of the theme in any manner. There is not a single unambiguous word in these verses which may be relied on as pointing to that distinction. Nor is there anything to show that No.20 contemplates one kind of sage, and the present, another kind.

To say that the present verse applies to the Sanyasin whose activity ranges not beyond mendicancy, involves a great strain of interpretation. Why it should not apply to the sage that happens to be in one of the three remaining Orders, it is difficult to see.

The Word परिग्रह denotes not 'the wife' necessarily. It stands for one's possessions generally and denotes the vanity of ownership in general. Nor is it necessary to construe शरीरं which means, 'of the body', to be used only in antithesis to activities other than those of mendicancy. 'Merely of the body' might very well exclude internal activities such as desire, egotism and vanity, which verse after verse exhorts the pupil to eschew, if his *karma* should be *no-karma*.

Without meaning the Sanyasin, शरीरं might undoubtedly mean either (1) what is necessary to sustain the body or (2) external activity as distinguished from internal. Vivriti considers both to be equally appropriate here. Sankara Bhashya accepts the former and condemns the latter. The reasons for the condemnation are, however not, convincing.

It is said by the author that if the broad sense of "external activities" be taken, the following dilemma is the result. The sage is doing forbidden actions or sanctioned ones. As to forbidden actions, the predication in the verse that he incurs no sin would be inconsistent and wrong. As to sanctioned actions, the predication of no sin is an uncalled-for assertion and quite superfluous, for the context. Thirdly, if such actions as are merely of the body be declared not sinful, the implication would be that all 'speech' and 'thought' was sinful. This would hardly be right.

Now these three objections are easily met. As, according to Sankaracharya, the Jeevan Mukta has transcended all rules and regulations in respect to what he may or may not do, actions sanctioned or forbidden to ordinary men do not affect him in the least. Besides, if, by शरीरं कर्म in the broad sense of external activity, we take only "sanctioned and proper work", even then, there seems no real difficulty. किल्बिषं stands not here for sin but for the bondage of Samsara.

One who does prohibited work must incur sin.
One who does what is allowed by Shastras may do

it with motives and incur the penalties of re-birth. One who does the same in the right spirit incurs no sin or penalty whatever. Hence, it will be quite right to speak of the sage here as performing sanctioned actions and incurring no penalties such as would attach to an ordinary doer thereof. The third objection, that all *speech* and *thought* would be sinful by implication, is not sound. 'External' or 'bodily' excludes *speech* and *mind* no doubt.

But by dint of repetition, Sri Krishna has made it quite clear that he is excluding not *all speech* and *all thought*, but only the mental impurities of desire, egotism and vanity. These are the internal activities. He sets off against the bodily activities under reference. The result is that mere bodily engagements from which the sting of mental impurity is absent, brings on no sin or penalty. Sridhara and Venkatanath take शरीरं as used in both the senses just noted.

But Neelakanta is warm in favour of the position that the Sanyasin alone is here contemplated. His view is that the verse mainly speaks of the Sanyasin who is also a sage. The first line relates to his trance when he has no desires and holds his mind and body absolutely under control. The second line speaks of his wakeful life when he does just what is necessary to sustain life and is free from sin. By reading त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः with special emphasis, it follows that it is the privilege of the Sanyasin alone not to do more than will simply keep up the flame of life. As for the house-holder, he cannot help performing all the work

laid down for his Order. However much he may have renounced desires or subdued the mind and the senses, he, still, is liable to sin, if like the Sanyasin he will not do more than what hunger and thirst imperiously crave for.

Utkarsha Deepika attacks Neelakanta's view as wrong. It need hardly be added that the language of the verse does not admit of the very special emphasis that Neelakanta chooses to place on शरीरं कर्म and the startling result that married people may not limit their activities on the analogy of the ascetic. Reverting for a moment to the view of Sankaracharya, we find, he thinks that the Sanyasin incurs no sin because of the simple fact that he accepts alms and sustains his body and does nothing more: In respect to these highly narrowed activities, Sankaracharya seems to think, no question can arise whether these too mean authorized doings or forbidden acts, and no sin is conceivable as a possible consequence. It is on this notion, that he interprets शरीरं to mean "what is alone necessary for physical upkeep," rather than adopt the literal meaning of 'physical acts generally.' But though one may do what hunger and thirst imperiously call for, still the methods used may involve forbidden actions.

That the man merely sustains life does not necessarily mean that he does so by law-ful and pious means alone. If he does so by unauthorised means, there is no question of any sin, and to negative it, as the verse does, is superfluous. If he does it by un

authorised means, to negative sin is wrong. This is the argument of Sankaracharya employed to refute the interpretation that शरीरं denotes all activities of the body. But the same objection holds good even if we take शरीरं to mean life-sustaining work alone.

Sankarananda notes this point and agrees that the mendicancy of the Sanyasin who eschews all work other than what is needed to sustain life, does not *ipso facto* exclude every possibility of sin. Then he formulates reasons why he does not incur it. He puts the matter thus:-

(1) It is possible that the mendicant may receive gifts from the unworthy. If so, he incurs sin. But the mendicant here happening to be a sage who has realized Brahman and the falsity of *karma*, this prevents or burns up sin, or it may be,

(2) That though the mendicant's life is all right, he may, in times of disease or disability, eat forbidden food, or do a wrong act. For instance, eight things, viz., honey, flesh, liquor, betel, oil, drugs, women and gold, are forbidden by Shastras to ascetics. But in times of extreme peril, these may be taken and no sin follows. Or it may be,

(3) that त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः, means not physical acts at all but only spiritual contemplation, Thus understood, the text says "Engaged only in the introspection of the Atman, he incurs no sin."

In these explanations, the fallacy is obvious. As to No.2, it may be noted that the exemption spoken

of is universal. Any one finding himself *in extremis* may strain a point just to save his life, and the Sanyasin is no exception to the rule. He escapes from sin not because of his special sanctity. We see, moreover, that Sri Krishna is not formulating a general Dharma Sastra of rules and exceptions like Manu. He is dwelling only on the point how *karma* is virtually "no karma." In doing so, he says it is *no karma*, because no sin results from the *karma* done; and why not? Because verses Nos. 19, 20 and the first line of No. 21 say, the *karma* in question is free from the poison of greed and vanity. To say that the *karma* in question does not beget sin because of some rule in Manu relating to conditions of *extremis* is altogether beside the point.

As to No. 3, to construe शारीरं to mean 'spiritual' instead of 'physical' is a forced interpretation. 'Engaged in introspection, one incurs no sin':—What has this got to do with the present subject? How is *work* demonstrated to be no-work, if introspective meditation chances to be pious. The contradiction between work and no-work should be accepted and not avoided, and then, an explanation furnished as to why the doer is no-doer, and in what sense. Leaving all that was said about desire and vanity alone, and not connecting it with the second line of the verse (21) under notice, to construe this line as if it related to some recluse who is meditating away, is to make the whole argument disjointed and purposeless.

As to No. I explanation, if it be meant that sin is prevented because the sage sees अकर्म in कर्म it will

be in keeping with the context. If it be meant that apart from the abandonment of काम and संकल्प, it is the realization of Monism that prevents sin, such a lesson is here out of place.

In this connection, it is valuable to note a passage from some Smriti quoted by Venkatanath in his commentary of this verse. It consists of seven stanzas. It begins by saying that (1) the tongueless, (2) the impotent, (3) the lame, (4) the blind, (5) the deaf, and (6) the idiot, among mendicants, is saved. One who is indifferent about his food being sweet or bitter, and speaks mildly, agreeably, and to the point, is 'tongue-less.' One who looks upon a female infant just born and on a girl of sweet sixteen with equal indifference, is 'impotent.' One whose roaming is confined to a yojana and who wanders not except for purposes of nature, is 'lame.' One who, standing or walking, sees no fear anywhere, is 'blind.' One who hears sweet, short, charming and comforting words, and is indifferent, is deaf. One who is in contact with pleasure-giving objects and yet behaves as if he were asleep, is an 'idiot.' The value of this passage lies in bringing out the Geeta lessons pointedly that *doing* is *non-doing* if the former is free from the poison which vitiates the operation of the senses and converts these last into our worst foes while they truly are and ought to be our best allies and friends.

22) यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबद्ध्यते ॥

यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टः ...	satisfied with what is obtained unsought
द्वन्द्वातीतः ...	risen above pairs of opposites
विमत्सरः ...	free from envy
समः ...	the same
सिद्धौ ...	in success
असिद्धौ ...	in failure
च ...	and
कृत्वा ...	doing
अपि ...	although
न निबद्ध्यते ...	is not bound

“One who is satisfied with what is obtained unsought, who has risen above pairs of opposites, who is free from envy, and who is the same in success as well as failure, does not get bound, although employed in work.”

One verse looks like another and redundancy seems to be glaring. But looking deeper, the logical sequence manifests itself.

This verse is also one of the bunch of 5 verses that explain how कर्म is अकर्म. We were first told that desire and egotism should be eschewed (19-20). This led to the enquiry how we may do so. Subjugation of the mind was then advised as an effective means for the purpose (21). This again called for elucidation, mental subjugation not being an easy achievement by any means.

The present verse advises contentment, freedom from envy, and equanimity, as important steps in mental discipline. What 'equanimity' is by which one is said to rise above pairs of opposites, is explained by the second line which advises one to take success and failure with equal coolness. We thus see that one statement has led to another, the chain of explanations being closely linked and riveted together. The last quarter "He is not bound, although employed in work" is a statement in other words of कर्म being no कर्म. Verse 20 ended by saying "he does no work at all."

To avoid the misapprehension this might lead to, that all work was unreal, verse 21 paraphrased the clause saying that "he incurs no sin or penalties." This last predication itself is not quite unambiguous. Forbidden physical work is bound to be sinful. Authorized physical work called for no eulogy that it is sinless. This puzzle is solved by taking the sin spoken of in a special sense. Work entails the bondage of Samsara, although the Shastras may have fully sanctioned its performance, if the doer be mercenary in aim.

In order to make it clear that किल्बिष in verse 21 is not *sin* as it may be ordinarily understood, but the liability of re-birth, the present verse paraphrases the clause कुर्वन्नाप्नोतिकिल्बिषं "doing, he incurs no sin" by the words कृत्वापि न निबध्यते "though doing, he is not bound." This is the purport according to Sri Madhwa.

Sankaracharya traces the sequence thus: Both verses (Nos. 21 & 22) deal with the Sanyasin alone. Verse No. 21 said that the Sanyasin incurred no sin by engaging in such work alone as was indispensable for the upkeep of life. The doubt arises here whether the Sanyasin has unfettered license to employ any means lawful or forbidden for the sake of sustenance. Verse 21 left this vague. The present verse sets this doubt at rest by stating that he should adhere to the rules of his Order. He is prohibited by Dharma Shastra from soliciting alms or begging for comforts. Beyond his rags, and the bowl, and the wooden shoes, he ought not to earn or keep any articles or furniture. All this is conveyed by यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टः "satisfied by what is obtained unsought."

I cannot follow this insistent attitude that these verses apply only to the Sanyasin. The language is quite consistent if applied to men of other Orders also. Jada Bharata in his third incarnation was a Brahmacharin. He was a sage of mature wisdom, and fulfilled completely the description of the text. Tanti Deva was a householder-king and his description in Bhagavata IX-18-13 tallies with the Geeta delineation.

Neelakanta does not feel convinced that the Geeta verses should be confined to the Sanyasin alone. He refers to Sankara Bhashya and notes that it has been so applied. But he chooses his own meaning. His view is that verse 21 applies, no doubt, to the Sanyasin only, but the present verse applies to the householder. He construes the words of the verse in accordance with this idea.

It is the *grihastha* that is satisfied with what earnings come of themselves, that is free from envy, that transcends the influence of heat and cold, and that is evenly poised between success and failure, who is spoken of here 'as not being bound.' He performs rites and sacrifices, but does not care for their rewards; nor does he get them. His spiritual knowledge prevents fruits or sins from enslaving, or clinging to, him. This view of Neelakanta is somewhat consoling to members of the first three Orders. It conveys relief to them and allays the alarm roused by Sankaracharya and most of his followers who will not tolerate any one but the Sanyasin coming within the description of the text.

Sankarananda construes the sequence and the purport of the verse under notice in his own way. He thinks that the verses 20, 21 and 22 apply to *three different classes of Sanyasin-sages*. The yati has no work to do but what is needed to be alive. Verse 21 dealt with the sanyasin who is silent and meditative. To him Mukti is assured. Verse 22 deals with another class of ascetics, *viz.*, those who live like the boa-constrictor, the huge snake of the forest lying motionless where it is and grasping what food gets into its mouth by chance (यदृच्छालाभ). To one leading such a life, it matters not whether the food obtained is pure or impure, and comes from a good source or a bad one.

The reader may note the difference between Sankaracharya and Sankarananda.

The former brings out the points (1) that verses 21 and 22 relate to the *same* Yati; (2) that verse 22 simply qualifies and limits the scope of his life-sustaining activities; (3) that the *Yati* is bound to obey Shastras in respect to the food he accepts and the acts he does for his sustenance. The latter, on the other hand, thinks (1) that verse 20 deals with one class of Yatis (ascetics) and verse 21 with quite another class, and (2) that the Yati of verse 22 (who is compared to the motionless mountain-snake) need not be concerned as to what he gets or does, as he is incapable of contamination.

Thus, among the Sankara school, at least three divergent views prevail.

i. Apply the verse to the *Grihasta*, says Neelakanta.

ii. Apply it to Yatis, and let them obey Shastras as to how they will get on, says Sankaracharya.

iii. Apply it to Yatis of a special kind, who are free to get on as they like, says Sankarananda.

This divergence is suggestive and instructive. It shows that the language of the text is wide and comprehensive enough to include any person of any caste or Order who possesses the mental qualifications set out. And the first of these qualifications is that he should be satisfied with whatever comes of itself. It denotes a highly disciplined mind that is not agitated by the fever of disappointments and worried by eagerness to put forth efforts to grasp at acquisitions.

The next qualification is worded द्वन्द्वातीत. This is a familiar expression – of which a great deal has been said before. It means ‘pairs of opposites’ such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, etc.

Madhusoodana explains this expression द्वन्द्वातीत by pointing out that the sage obviously triumphs over all sense-experiences while he is in trance, and conquers them in wakeful moments also, by reason of the *Brahman-bliss* he revels in. It must be observed that the sage plunged in समाधि (trance) is out of place in connection with द्वन्द्व spoken of here. Sages-in-trance are impervious, like blocks of wood, not only to pairs of opposites but to sense-experience in general. It is hardly appropriate to talk of them as not being subject to pairs of opposites. Sankarananda takes द्वन्द्व in the sense of *Dwaita*, and makes out that द्वन्द्वातीत is a person who sees the Universe as one with Brahman and perceives no *duality* at all anywhere. To this interpretation, the objection is clear that Sri Krishna need hardly have used such an expression to denote the plain and simple Monist.

Used in connection with the worker, intended to depict his mental elevation and purity, and wedged between expressions do-nothing contentment and freedom from envy, the expression द्वन्द्वातीत ought to signify an attitude of mind rather than the fundamental lumination of the Monist's Atman. If one who has risen above every sensation and experience of

the world, is meant by द्वन्द्वातीत, we need hardly be told again that he is free from envy (विमत्सर) and is contented. These are but small matters included in his all-comprehensive self-realization.

As to the word विमत्सर, some incongruity is evidently felt by Sankara-commentators in मत्सर meaning 'envy.' They therefore understand it to mean *hate* in general. As, according to them, the sage has known all men and things as one with himself, there is no possibility of his hating any one. Vivriti takes the word मत्सर to mean the pining mind that is corroded by the feeling of inferiority and weakness. It is left to the reader to choose.

23) गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥

गतसङ्गस्य	...	of one who is devoid of attachment
मुक्तस्य	...	free from egotism
ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः...		of mind fixed in knowledge
यज्ञाय	...	for the sake of Vishnu
आचरतः	...	doing
कर्म	...	the karma
समग्रं	...	all
प्रविलीयते	...	becomes extinct

“The karma of one who is devoid of attachment, who is free from egotism, whose mind is fixed in knowledge, and who does work only to please Vishnu, becomes totally extinct.”

Among the members of the Awaited school, opinions differ as to the exact application and purport of this verse also. Sridhara applies it to the seeker as well as the sage. Some, however, consider it applicable to the sage alone. Among this class, some think that the *Sanyasin-sage* alone is contemplated.

Others take it that the house-holder-sage like Janaka is the person spoken of. Others again hold that it is not the entire group of ‘Sanyasin-sages’ that are contemplated, but only a section of them comprising those who have thoroughly renounced worldly ties and forms, and simply keep the body and soul together by an irreducible minimum of necessities.

It is Madhusoodana that says that whereas verses Nos. 21 and 22 relate to the Sanyasin-sage, the verse under notice (23) applies only to the Grihastha-sage, like Janaka. He thinks that this verse repeats, in respect to the Grihastha, what verse No. 20 stated about the ascetic. This explanation is not convincing, because verse No. 20 was, by this very writer, construed in a general manner so as to apply to all sages, be they Sanyasins or Grihasthas. Hence verse 20 should be quite enough to satisfy the doubt whether the *Yagna*-doings of Grihasthas may not be of a bondage-compelling character.

Secondly, Madhusoodana has interpreted verse 20 in a peculiar manner. He understood it to be an answer to the objection which may be thus stated: "Let the sage get all his past *karma* burnt up. Let not future *karma* contaminate him. But what of the current *karma* which does not come under either of those heads? Does that affect the seer or not?" Verse 20 is supposed to have answered this query in the negative. But the verse under notice does not deal with the same subject-matter, *viz.*, the current *karma* as distinguished from the past and the future. It obviously speaks of one who is devoid of attachment, is free from every flaw, who is established in Adwaitic realization, and *whose karma past, present and future, is a nullity.*

Moreover, it is difficult to see what indication there is in the present verse to determine that it applies to Grihasthas only. Madhusoodana seems to rely on the word यज्ञ for the clue. But this is not right. यज्ञ Has been interpreted to mean Vishnu, by this writer and others. Anandagiri, the commentator of Sankara Bhashya gives this as the only meaning of यज्ञ. Moreover, this context, as will appear well later on, speaks of ज्ञान (knowledge) itself as यज्ञ.

Thus, there is no difficulty at all in connecting यज्ञ here with Sanyasins. Madhusoodana's brethren, Sankarananda and Venkatanath, as well as their leader Sankaracharya himself, see no difficulty in connecting यज्ञ with Sanyasins. They take यज्ञ in the

ordinary sense of 'sacrifice' and explain the sage's participation therein as meant to guide and set an example to ordinary men. Thus the theory of the verse being exclusively applicable to householders is not convincing. Nor is there any good reason for the view that this verse is an explanation of verse 20 alone, rather than of Nos. 21, 22, or 19 also. For, there are words in all these verses expressing sentiments more or less similar to those in the verse under comment.

I have shown at some length how all these verses have been, on poor data, distributed by these learned commentators as applicable to Grihasthas or Yatis or seekers in general Seers in general. The simple truth is that the language of every one of these verses 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23, is general and comprehensive. Otherwise, Neelakanta would not have pitched upon verse 22 for the benefit of the Grihastha sage, as Madhusoodana does the present verse (23) for the same purpose.

We may next notice the view of Sankaracharya with whom Sankarananda and Venkatanatha express concurrence. They divide the Yati-sage into two classes. One comprises those who, having crossed all bondage and having really no concern with work, find themselves, owing to unexhausted *prarabdha*, drawn into the sphere of work and, therefore, go through the entire round of duties that legitimately belong to the ignorant house-holder alone, just to guide him and set an example to society (लोकसंग्रहार्थ). The other class

of Yati-sages comprises those who have thrown off all shackles of *karma* and simply await their time, just doing what is barely necessary to keep up life. With reference to this classification, the said commentators think that verses 21 and 22 deal with the latter group and that the present verse (23) deals, like verse 20, with the former group.

Here again, it has to be observed that the foundation for this distinction is by no means easy to find. Just as the *data* for making some verses apply to the householder and others to the ascetic are meager and slender; so also, are the *data* for this other distinction between one kind of seer and another. If the objector should point to the word यज्ञ as furnishing a clue to the view that the Yati of No.1 group is intended, the reply to this is simple. does not यज्ञ mean 'sacrifice' but Vishnu. (see Anandagiri). The sage, high and low, and the seeker too are, all of them, workers for the grace of God.

Instead of relying on this supposed sub-division among Yati sages, or the distinction between the Grihastha and the Sanyasin, Neelakanta chalks out a way of his own to explain the object of the verse under comment and distinguish it from the preceding verses. He thinks that the final predicate in verse 20, "He is no doer," that in verse 21, "he is unsullied," and that in verse 22, "he is not bound", were ambiguous and gave room for the doubt whether the loss of *karma* meant that *karma's* bondage-compelling power was held in abeyance or whether *karma* becomes

totally extinct so as never to revive again. The present verse, in his opinion, undertakes to clear this doubt by accepting the second of the above-said alternatives. प्रविलीयते of the text furnishes this answer.

Neelakanta is nothing if not original. This is the grievance of Utkarsha Deepika against him. There is no basis at all for the view that, if the expressions in verses 20, 21 and 22, quoted above were ambiguous, the language used here (in verse 23), viz., प्रविलीयते ('melts away' or 'is lost') is less ambiguous. In fact, Neelakanta himself observes at the end of his notes on this verse that प्रविलय is not to be understood literally as loss or extinction. *Karma*, in fact, does not and cannot die. Some Srutis even speak of the sage's wealth as going to his sons, his good *karma* going to his well-wishers, and his bad *karma* to his detractors. This being so, the extinction of *karma* is only figurative, and the meaning simply is that the sage realizes that he is free, and he becomes so, in fact. Thus प्रविलीयते turns out to be as badly ambiguous as the other expressions, if not more so. If by glosses and lengthy supplies of ellipses, the requisite sense is to be unearthed, why not try that feat with the expressions used in verses 20, 21 and 22?

Now a word about the doubt itself formulated by Neelakanta. He puts the doubt in this form, "whether *karma* is lost because its power is held in abeyance, or because it dies away, progeny and all." Of these the second limb is accepted and the first

is rejected. The reason for rejecting it is that, if *karma* is simply suspended, it may revive and bring down the Mukta into Samsara some day. But this fear is groundless, for, *karma* is not temporarily held in check. It is permanently disabled. Its inherent power to bring about Samsara is gone, so that it can never raise its head again. Whether it is alive or dead does not, therefore, matter. It is the law that the मुक्त shall never revert to Samsara.

Shastras say so and there is no good of creating fanciful fears based on laymen's reasonings. Neelakanta's conclusion, too, is to the effect that *karma ceases* to breed Samsara, although it is alive and is full of latent capacity to do so. So the two alternatives of the doubt as formulated by him are but distinctions without difference.

Sri Madhwa steers clear of these groundless subtleties. A number of verses explained how कर्म was अकर्म from various aspects. They brought into relief the central feature of all that the doer believed not in his own ability or power, but firmly relied on God, and that he exiled desire and its wicked allies. Having spoken of this from verses 18 to 23, Sri Krishna is about to enter on a fresh aspect of the theme. He is about to expatiate on the doer's mental attitude and the way *he* looks upon "sacrifices." Before doing so, a passing summary in a few words of what has been taught is made with a view to impress the lesson already taught and introduce the subject of यज्ञ.

The reader will see that the words of the verse under notice are but paraphrases of the expressions already found in this context, even if their interpretation by the Advaitic commentators be taken as correct.

The reader will consider and note the word यज्ञाय. Ordinarily it means "for sacrifice." But यज्ञ is Vishnu. The lexicon gives this meaning. A Sruti also declares this. Most commentators allow it. Anandagiri takes it as the only admissible meaning here. Sri Madhwa, of course, is of the same opinion.

Madhusoodana and others, however, resort to an alternative meaning also. They construe it as meaning Vishnu. They add, however, that यज्ञाय also means "to make sacrifices popular and acceptable to ordinary people." Their idea is that sages do *karma* in order to set an example to the unlearned and get the latter to love sacrifices and perform them.

Sridhara too adopts both the meanings, *viz.*, (1) for the grace of Vishnu; and (2) for popularizing sacrifices. He thinks that in respect to the Seeker (who has not yet attained to perfection) the former sense applies and that, in respect to the sage, however, the latter is the sense applicable.

It is to be noted that whenever these commentators speak of God and His grace, they do so with apologies and explanations. They dislike being caught praising God and His grace as if these were anything higher than the sage himself. It is, in their view,

derogatory to the sage that he should worship God and seek His grace. It is the duty of the mere Seeker, an imperfect, ignorant, dualist, to look up to God and pray for His Blessing. To this effect, more or less, is the note sounded by Neelakanta too. All this is startling, subversive, as it is, of sound religion.

I have already pointed out that, in the opinion of Sri Madhwa and most of the other commentators, यज्ञ here stands for God Narayana. It is He that is truly यज्ञ. The third Avatar of Vishnu—the Boar Form is described in long passages in Puranas as ‘sacrifice’ itself. The various limbs of the Boar are said to be various classes of sacrifice known to the Vedas and the various objects such as the victim, the fire, the ladle, the oblation and so on. Making up a sacrifice. Vishnu is thus spoken of pre-eminently as the Presiding Deity of यज्ञs. यज्ञ is the name of an Avatar of Vishnu, the son of Akoothi, the daughter of Swayambhuva Manu (Bhagavata, viii).

He was so named by reason of Vishnu being the Lord and Enjoyer of every sacrifice. This Avatar is the deity of Isavas yopanishad as Bhagavata, Skandha viii, Adhyaya I, clearly states. Thus, when translating यज्ञ into Narayana, the under-current of thought relating to ‘sacrifices’ is not to be lost sight of. It is this which introduces us to the theme of ‘sacrifices’ going to be dwelt upon at some length in the following slokas.

24) ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्म कर्म समाधिना ॥

ब्रह्म	...	Brahman
अर्पणं	...	the articles of sacrifice
ब्रह्म	...	Brahman
हविः	...	the offering oblation
ब्रह्माग्नौ	...	In the Fire of Brahman
ब्रह्मणा	...	By Brahman
हुतं	...	the Pouring
ब्रह्म	...	Brahman
एव	...	only
तेन	...	By him
गन्तव्यं	...	to be reached
ब्रह्म	...	Brahman
कर्म	...	Sacrifice
समाधिना	...	along with meditation

“One who sees that the sacrificial articles are Brahman, that the oblation is Brahman, that the fire is Brahman, that the act of pouring into fire is Brahman, and that the sacrifice along with meditation is Brahman is alone the person by whom Brahman is reached.”

अर्पण Denotes the articles, tools, utensils and things, used in the course of the sacrifice. हुतं is the

very act of pouring into the fire. कर्म Is the entire sacrifice. समाधिना *along with meditation*, denotes that meditation also, being part of the sacrifice, is Brahman. At the end, an ellipsis "He who knows me thus" should be supplied, so that the antecedent of तेन (by him) in the verse may be clear.

In the last verse यज्ञ was translated into 'Vishnu.' For his sake, every sacrifice should be undertaken. Vishnu is no other than Brahman. It is wrong to treat Him as simply one of the Trinity with some functions allotted to Him by a superior law. Vishnu is Brahman the Supreme. At the end of the Purva Meemamsa, the two aphorisms are "He is said to be Vishnu," "They call him Brahman."

The word 'यज्ञाय' of the last verse denoted, by the dative affix, that Vishnu should be propitiated and His grace should be sought by means of sacrifice. The devotee has to be told of the '*modus operandi*' for associating the sacrifice with Brahman. He is told in the text that he ought to see the hand of God in everything, in the ladle, in the ghee, in the fire, in the act of pouring, in the meditation of the sacrificer, and in the entire sacrifice. Everything is His gift and every act is His act. We must see Him all in all.

The last verse used the word 'मुक्तस्य' to denote one who is free from attachments and egotism. This required the further lesson as to what are the specific objects, in a sacrificer for example, which should be

disowned, and who, if not the sacrifice, is the true Doer. The verse under notice furnishes the lesson and states that the sacrificer should disown, not any one or two specific objects, but every one of them, and that he should believe in God's ownership and agency in all.

Thus, the text continues the thread by furnishing further light on the words यज्ञाय and मुक्तस्य of the last verse. It expands the idea of 'ज्ञानावस्थितेतसः' also, by setting out what sort of ज्ञान constitutes the right attitude of mind for a true seer. Sri Madhwa puts the relation of the verses in this manner.

Sankaracharya thinks that this verse amplifies the clause 'कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते' of the last verse. By it, it was said that all *karma* dies. What is the death understood here? How can *karma* die? These doubts are now to be cleared by the statement that the Seer sees the unreality of the sacrifice and all its accessories, and perceives Brahman as the only reality in their midst. Of this, a little more, later on.

In interpreting the expressions, Sri Madhwa includes कर्म and समाधि among the objects to be identified (*in his own special sense, of course*) with Brahman, so that the objects to be identified are, (1) the articles, (2) the oblation, (3) the fire, (4) the doer, (5) the pouring, (6) the sacrifice, and (7) even meditation. Other commentators count only five leaving out 6 & 7. They take ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना as a single compound word, meaning "by one who deems it Brahma-karma".

The difference is somewhat noteworthy. The statement is important that even 'meditation' is Brahman. Whereas others will identify external objects alone with Brahman, Sri Madhwa includes the mental process involved in a sacrifice as being related to Brahman likewise. One way of understanding the purport of the text is by taking it as a proposition of identity and explaining the sense in which the identity should be understood. The language of the text may be understood in another way also. The rendering will then be, "Articles of sacrifice *are dedicated to* Brahman, so is the oblation to Brahman, in the fire of Brahman, and by Brahman, etc." Here the confusion caused by using the word 'identity' does not arise, and the need to explain the special sense in which the 'identity' is to be understood here, is also avoided.

The proposition that, in a sacrifice, the doer, the deed, the agents, the instruments, the methods and all, are Brahman, means, according to Sri Msdhwa, that all of them are under His power and at His absolute disposal. According to Sankaracharya, it means that Brahman alone is true and the seer sees nothing but Brahman anywhere. According to Ramanujacharya, it means that everything is the product of Brahman who is both the *efficient* and the *material* cause thereof.

In Padma Purana, there is a verse quoted by Sri Madhwa.

"You, O Lord, are called *all*, because all are under your control. You are so named for that reason, and not because you are identical with all." Sri Krishna

says in Adhyaya IX, verses 16, 17 and 18, "I am the oblation, I, the sacrifice ; I, the ancestral offering ; I, the fire-giving herb ; I am the Mantram – the butter – the fire – and the burnt offering – 16. I am the father of the Universe ; the mother, the supporter, the grand-sire, the Holy One to be known, the syllable Om, Rik, Sama and Yajur – 17. I am the goal, supporter, lord, witness, shade, shelter, origin, dissolution, stay, rest-house, and the seed imperishable – 18.

A collective study of these verses affords sufficient grounds for the conclusion that it is not the unreality of everything mentioned that is contemplated, but the subordination of all to God.

With the present verse, we are entering on the study of an important subject. We are being asked not to take 'sacrifices' in any technical sense. No doubt, a Vedic sacrifice like *Jyotishtoma*, has certain well-known parts and things constituting the ceremony.

The priest, the platform, the offerings, the implements, the time, the methods, the appurtenances and accessories, are all elaborately specified and regulated. Sri Krishna calls upon us to rise above the technicalities and understand 'sacrifice' in a general sense so as to comprehend every dutiful performance. He proceeds to enumerate the various kinds of sacrifice conceivable, in this comprehensive manner, and includes, in the category, the Yoga methods of breath-control, fasts, abstinences and mental doings implied in study, cogitation, and meditation.

Sri Krishna's object is clear that war itself undertaken as a duty is as much a sacrifice as Jyotishtoma. In this war, the apostles of wickedness are the victims, Yudhishtira is the Yajamana, the battle is the fire, and Sri Krishna is the Brahman, the true Master of the ceremonies.

As an example of how sacrifice is understood in Vedic literature in an esoteric and comprehensive way, reference may be made to Adhyaya V, Khanda 19 to 24 of Chandogya. Every Brahmin puts into his mouth a few particles of cooked rice when he is at meals, before actually eating the food. He utters *Grace*, as it were, and offers to Prana, Vyana, Apana, Samana, and Udana. The Upanishad passage explains this as so many sacrifices and tells us of the Deities who preside over them and the relation of one sacrifice to another.

Khanda, 19, M.1. "At the time of eating, the first morsel that is taken should be considered as a *Homa* material. The first oblation that he offers, let him do so with the Mantra "Pranaya Swaha." Then Prana is satisfied.

M.2. When the Prana is satisfied, the *eye* is satisfied; when the *eye* is satisfied, the *Sun* is satisfied; when the *Sun* is satisfied, *the consort of Vayu* is satisfied; when the consort of Vayu is satisfied, the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss is satisfied. The Dyau (consort of

Vayu) and the Sun rule the Eastern gate. When He, the Lord, is satisfied, then follows the satisfaction of the sacrificer with his offspring and cattle, and he gets health and energy and intellectual splendour.

Khanda 20, M.1. Then when he offers the second oblation, let him offer it saying "Vyanaya Swaha" and Vyana is satisfied.

M.2. When Vyana is satisfied, the *Ear* is satisfied; when the *Ear* is satisfied, *the consort of Vayu* (दिश) is satisfied; when the consort of Vayu is satisfied, the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss (Vayu) is satisfied. The consort of Vayu and the Moon rule the Southern gate. When the Lord is satisfied, then the sacrificer is satisfied along with his offspring and cattle, and he gets magnanimity, bliss and Vedic splendour.

Khanda 21, M.1. Then when he offers the third oblation, let him offer it saying "Apanaya Swaha." Apana is satisfied.

M.2. When Apana is satisfied, *Speech* is satisfied. When speech is satisfied, *fire* is satisfied; when fire is satisfied, *Prithvi* is satisfied; when Prithvi is satisfied, the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss is satisfied. Prithvi and Fire rule the Western gate. When that Lord is satisfied, then the sacrificer is satisfied along with his offspring and cattle, with health, energy and intellectual splendour.

Khanda 22, M.1. Then when he offers the fourth oblation, let him offer it saying "Samanaya Swaha." Thus Samana is satisfied.

M.2. When *Samana* is satisfied, the *mind* is satisfied; when the mind is satisfied, *Indra* is satisfied; when *Indra* is satisfied, *Vidyut* (consort of Vayu) is satisfied; when the consort of Vayu is satisfied, the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss is satisfied. *Vidyut* (the consort of Vayu) and *Indra* rule the Northern gate. When the Lord is satisfied, then the sacrificer is satisfied, along with his offspring and cattle, with health, energy and intellectual splendour.

Khanda 24, M.1. He, who, not knowing this Lord Vaiswanara, offers an Agnihotra, is like unto that person who, removing the live-coals, offers libations in ashes.

M.2. But he who, knowing the Lord thus, offers an Agnihotra, offers, in fact, oblation to all the souls animating all bodies in all worlds.

M.3. As the tuft of the 'Isheeka' reed entering into the fire is quickly reduced to ashes, thus indeed are burnt up all his sins, who, knowing the Lord thus, offers an Agnihotra.

To set out this subject in a tabular form:-

1	2	3	4	5
Narayana	Vasudeva	Sankarshana	Pradyumna	Aniruddha.
Dyu	Parjanya	Dhara	Purusha	Sthree

1. Dyu (Narayana).

Narayana	Vasudeva	Sankarshana	Pradyumna	Aniruddha.
Fuel	Smoke	Flame	Burning coal.	Sparks.
Sun	Rays	Daylight	Moon	Stars.

Oblation, Faith : Is born, Soma.

2. Parjanya (Vasudeva)

Narayana	Vasudeva	Sankarshana	Pradyumna	Aniruddha.
Fuel	Smoke	Flame	coal of Fire	Sparks.
Air	Cloud	Lightning	Thunder	Roar

Oblation, Soma : Birth, Rain,

3. Dhara (Sankarshana)

Narayana	Vasudeva	Sankarshana	Pradyumna	Aniruddha.
Fuel	Smoke	Flame	coals	Sparks.
Year	Akasa	Night	Quarters	Divisions of speech.

Oblation, Rain; Birth, food,

4. Purusha (Man) Pradyumna.

Narayana	Vasudeva	Sankarshana	Pradyumna	Aniruddha.
Fuel	Smoke	Flame	coals	Sparks.
Speech	Prana	Tongue	Eye	Ear

Oblation, Food; Birth, Semen,

5. Sthree (Woman) Anirudha.

Narayana	Vasudeva	Sankarshana	Pradyumna	Aniruddha.
Fuel	Smoke	Flame	coals	Sparks.
Private Organ	Love	Womb	Coition	Pleasure

Oblation, Semen: Birth, embryo.

I have quoted a long passage and appended a tabular form. The reader will see from the trend of thought underlying, that evolution is regarded as a huge sacrifice and that, at every stage, the Lord presides in one of His Five Forms.

Applying the Upanishad to the Geeta text, we see the force of the teaching that Brahman is present, inspiring and vivifying every object and every act in every sacrifice, whether it be gross and external, or subtle and internal.

The annotation of Sankaracharya on this Geeta text is long and consists of two parts. (i) The first portion explains the verse as Sankaracharya views it : (ii) and the second portion criticizes and rejects an older interpretation.

Sankaracharya's interpretation is that the sage regards all the composing elements of a sacrifice as unreal like the snake-in-the-rope and the silver-in-the-mother-of-pearl. Brahman on which those things are super-imposed by illusion is the only reality. This is how the sage who performs Jyotishtoma and the like, to set an example to the world, regards his own doings. In this context, the *Sanyasin sage* who has renounced all ceremony and simply does what is just necessary to keep up the flame of life, is not left out of account. To encourage him, his life of knowledge and renunciation is eulogized as a sacrifice also. He is told that Brahman is the ladle, fire, oblation and all, and therefore his own light of knowledge is यज्ञ. In other words, it is pointed out to him that he has

no reason to despond or grieve over the fact that he is doing no यज्ञ, because the mental study, cogitation, and meditation he is plunged in, is itself यज्ञ.

Taking stand on this interpretation, Sankaracharya rejects an older one which is to the effect that Brahman should be regarded as being immanent in and inspiring everything that goes to make up a sacrifice. In this view, Brahman was looked upon like God pervading an image, so that, there was no need to regard the 'sacrifice' and all things appurtenant thereto, as false.

Sankaracharya's objections to the old interpretation are these :-

(i) As the context is intended to eulogise ब्रह्मज्ञान, as यज्ञ, by itself, to regard Brahman as a deity immanent in objects offends against the context.

(ii) It is not ब्रह्मविद्या to know that objects are inspired by Brahman. To know thus is knowledge of worldly objects but not ब्रह्मविद्या which consists of *unity-realization* pure and simple.

(iii) To know objects as suggested, does not lead to Mukti, for ब्रह्मविद्या alone can do so. The text is, ब्रह्म "is to be reached by him." This shows that God's immanence is not the object of knowledge, but God himself stripped of the world which should be brushed aside as मिथ्या.

None of these objections seems to be of any force. That the context means a eulogy of ज्ञान may be conceded for argument's sake. To know God's immanence is as much ब्रह्मज्ञान as to know any other attribute of his. The notion that Brahmagnana is realization of Brahman's *identity* with the world and not a knowledge of his omnipresence and other attributes, is a fundamental misapprehension, It is real ब्रह्मविद्या to know that all of us are inspired and strengthened by God, and that He also supplies the motive power of the world's entire activity. It is this conviction firmly established that conveys us to the goal of salvation.

The objections urged by Sankaracharya against the "creed of Immanence" being thus feeble, it only remains to see whether his pet theory of Universal Unreality can be deduced from the language of the Geeta text. (1) There is no word here to denote the idea that the sacrifice and all its appurtenances are but mirage. (2) It is a distinction without a difference that one kind of sage regards the sacrifice and all as Brahman and that another kind of sage looks at the converse taking Brahmagnana as the sacrifice and its accessories. (3) If everything be unreal, why take the trouble of specifying things in this manner, *viz.*, A is unreal, B is unreal, and C too, and so on. A reply to this last is attempted in Sankara Bhashya.

The object, it is said, is to praise ज्ञान by drawing attention to its being such a praiseworthy thing as यज्ञ. But this is a very feeble argument indeed. If *gnana*

could not stand on its own merits and required to be praised, its greatness is not brought about by making a यज्ञ of it. One who is not prepared to think highly of by ज्ञान itself, is hardly ever likely to think so of it, because it is said to be a form of यज्ञ.

Hence, the interpretation that rests on the unreality of the world, is far weaker than the other one resting on God's Universal Immanence and Inspiration. Venkatanath, who is a strong member of the Monist Brotherhood, points to the interpretation of Sri Madhwa and Ramanujacharya and brushes it aside saying, "This is virtually condemned in Sankara Bhashya itself, and so, let these commentators get taught and corrected by it. Therefore we do not undertake that task."

The reader must judge for himself which is the proper party to learn and from whom.

25) दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।
ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥

दैवं	...	God
एव	...	alone
अपरे	...	others
यज्ञं	...	as sacrifice
योगिनः	...	Paramahamsas or ascetics

पर्युपासते	...	worship
ब्रह्माग्नौ	...	In the fire of Brahman
अपरे	...	others
यज्ञं	...	to please यज्ञ, God (Narayana)
यज्ञेन	...	by means of sacrifice
एव	...	only
उपजुहति	...	make offerings

“Some others, who are Paramahamsas or ascetics, worship God, taking divine contemplation itself as sacrifice. Others (house-holders) make offerings in the fire of Brahman, by means of Agnihotra, dedicated to Yagna (Vishnu)”.

The subject began with verse No. 16 where Karma and Akarma were stated to be puzzles even to the wise. These words were then defined and explained in several verses. Now we enter upon a classification and sub-division of *karma* into various kinds. What is being treated of throughout, is pious *karma* and not mercenary work. The latter, being sordid and low, puts itself out of court. The two lines of the verse deal with two classes of doers. The first line speaks of those who look upon Divine worship and contemplation as, by themselves, constituting a sacrifice.

It is the view of the Sankara-school that the first line of the text relates to the sordid house-holder who performs काम्य sacrifice unto Deities like Indra and Agni. In their view, the second line deals with

Adwaitic ज्ञान of तत्त्वमसि "That thou art." The whole theme, according to them, is a eulogy of ज्ञान. It was begun with verse No. 24 and the conclusion appears in verse 33 where it is stated "that the sacrifice of self-realization is better than any sacrifice of objects." This being so, the first line of the text speaks, for a moment, of the selfish and sordid doer with a view to set off his littleness against the greatness of the sage referred to in the second line.

This presentment of the text seems quite inadmissible. The sordid worker is nowhere relevant in this context. He was dismissed long ago with a shower of censure (*Vide* verse 42 & c, in chapter II). We have been speaking of the pious worker alone all along here. A sharp departure by a single line into the subject of काम्य work, mars the theme by introducing an alien and uncalled-for subject.

They say that the reference to काम्य work is justified on the ground that it sets off the greatness of *gnana* by contrast. This is indeed very feeble. If *gnana* cannot stand on its own merits, it can hardly derive much importance from this contrast. The expression योगिनः in the text (men of wisdom, self-control, etc), is hardly appropriate to describe sordid workers such as Sankaras point to. It is an expression of greatness and appreciation, and काम्य doers hardly ever come in for any praise. Where is the necessity for taking दैव to mean Indra and the Gods alone, rather

than the God Supreme? Where is the difficulty in treating Divine worship or contemplation as, by itself, a form of sacrifice? If so regarded, this line of the text is in perfect harmony with the rest of the discourse, and the whole brings out an intelligible enumeration, one after another, of pious work alone.

Ramanujacharya differs from Sankaracharya, and takes the line in question as speaking of the pious performer who is engaged in Divine worship in temples and other places, or keeping images at home.

Sri Madhwa reads योगिनः with significance. He notes एव used with दैवं. The result is that those persons alone are contemplated who look upon Divine meditation itself as a sacrifice and are burdened with no external duties whatsoever. Those persons, therefore, are either ascetics or a special class of ascetics, known as Paramahamsas. The reader may note that four classes of ascetics are spoken of in the Shastras. (1) Kuteechaka, (2) Bahoodaka, (3) Hamsa and (4) Paramahamsa. Of the first group, are those whose renunciation is imperfect and who are maintained by their sons. In the second group, are those who are also called त्रिदण्डी. They wear tufts and sacred thread, and keep touring from place to place, day by day. The Hamsa wears thread and is एकदण्डि. He has no tuft. The Paramahamsa is one whose renunciation is perfect and who wears no thread or tuft, and has but one दण्ड. Of all the groups, the last one comprises

true ascetics who have no external duties to do and whose minds should be ever bent on divine contemplation which, they are called upon to regard as a 'sacrifice'.

In the light of these observations, Sri Madhwa's view that the first line of the text under notice deals with Paramahamsas who are engaged in nothing but divine contemplation, is intelligible. If however, all ascetics are deemed to be beyond the pale of physical sacrificial performances, the text may well apply to all ascetics.

To sum up in a few words, the line applies to sordid workers; so thinks Sankaracharya. It applies to all pious workers irrespective of their belonging to any Order; so thinks Ramanujacharya. It applies to ascetics in general or to Paramahamsas – says Sri Madhwa.

There seems no good reason to think, as Desikar does, that external physical doings alone are referred to here and not mental processes of meditation. As already observed, दैवमेवोपासते 'They do nothing but meditate on God' is significant.

Image-worship is a firmly established institution of every pious Hindu home. In Chapter III, Skandha XI, Bhagavata, this very subject of the Geeta discourse is discussed. It begins with *Karma*, *Akarma* and *Vikarma*, states the difficulty of understanding their true import, and proceeds gradually to set out in a few verses how every pious man should perform

image-worship, and in what spirit and mental attitude he should do so. The Process of bathing the images, adorning them, offering flowers, sandal, incense and food, unto them, is explained. The devotee is called on to meditate.

The dissertation in the Bhagavata is very suggestive and furnishes a commentary of the text. For in both, the subject is pious *karma*, and, as in the Bhagavata, so in the Geeta, we are told of Divine worship and contemplation. The identity of the themes being thus clear, we have a fair guide to the conclusion that it is not sordid work that is dealt with here, but the pious religious worship engaged in by ascetics.

Turning to the second line, the words यज्ञ and यज्ञेन have given room for a great deal of puzzle. These words are understood by Sri Madhwa and Ramanujacharya as pointing to house holders performing the 'fire-sacrifice'. They make offerings in Fire, through यज्ञ (Vishnu). This, performed in the right spirit, amounts to offerings made in Brahman Himself regarded as Fire. Thus is the line interpreted by Sri Madhwa. Ramanujacharya understands यज्ञ and यज्ञेन as denoting the *oblation and instruments* respectively of the fire-sacrifice. He renders it thus — "others make offerings (यज्ञ) in Brahmic Fire, through the instruments, articles and methods (यज्ञेन) laid down for, and employed in, the Vedic sacrifices." One would have thought that यज्ञ in the accusative sufficed to denote

all the component factors and appurtenances of the sacrifice. There is no special force in saying that the sacrificer performs it *through or by means of such and such accessories and instruments*. Hence यज्ञेन is understood by Sri Madhwa to denote God whose true agency is to be duly realized by the pious doer.

Sankaracharya thinks that this line is a figurative description of the Jeeva realizing his identity with Brahman. The unconditioned Brahman is the basis of all illusory super-impositions, and, as such, is called the fire. यज्ञ, The sacrificial oblation, is Jeeva, the conditioned. यज्ञेनैव Means that the Jeeva in his conditioned aspect alone is offered up as victim. The result is a descriptive paraphrase of the famous तत्त्वमसि "That thou art." The identity is cognized by stripping "that" and "thou" of their differential aspects and perceiving the pure Brahman alone in each.

Here is the pet theory of 'Unity' introduced on a plausible pretext. But there is no Sanskrit word in the verse to denote a conditioned Atman and distinguish him from the unconditioned Brahman. यज्ञ is said to stand for the conditioned Atman. But such a meaning is foreign to the word. The lexicon does not notice it. Yaska's enumeration is, it is said, in support of this position.

Assuming that यज्ञ may mean *the Atman*, there is no warrant for holding that it means the 'conditioned Being'. Atma is a name of God, and यज्ञ too

is a name of God (Vishnu). So it means God and not the conditioned Being called the Jeeva.

The text says, "offer the Atman *through the Atman* alone." The reader will please mark the phrase 'through the Atman alone.' If no more than a paraphrase of "That thou art" is intended, then the sentence would be complete with the statement "In Brahma, Fire, others offer the Atman." As 'Atman' means the conditioned soul, what is the point in saying that the soul is offered "through the soul only"? It is not in the conditioned aspect that it is offered up, but stripped of it. Hence यज्ञेन of the text is an indication that the meaning given is not sound.

Sankarananda evidently feels nervous over the word यज्ञेन interpreted to mean "through or in the shape of the Jeeva, the conditioned." He sees that ब्रह्माग्नौ यजं पर्युपासते would quite suffice, so as to tally with तत्त्वमसि. He therefore construes यज्ञेन to mean "with Vishnu". The meaning according to this is that "*they offer the Jeeva as well as Vishnu (Iswara)* into the fire of Brahman." In other words, Atman as well as God are unreal, conditioned Beings as they are. In their unconditioned aspect, they are one with the Absolute. Sad lot, that even Sri Krishna declaring himself to be the Brahman Supreme, turns out but a conditioned falsity!

Sridhara steers clear of the 'conditioned' and 'unconditioned' being contemplated here. The verse reads thus according to his interpretation, "others make sac-

rificial offerings in the Brahma-Fire, treating everything concerned in the light of the last verse (verse 24) as Brahman. यज्ञेन (as Yagna) indicates how he should look upon the ladle, the Mantra, the oblation, the gifts, and all. Thus Sridhara avoids construing यज्ञ in the text to mean the Jeeva, as all his brethren have done.

It is a bold effort on the part of Sankarananda to construe यज्ञ to mean Vishnu. It is bolder still for Sridhara to escape from the dominating influence of तत्त्वमसि and resist the temptation of dragging that much-misunderstood saying into service, whenever it is fancied there is a loop-hole for it.

26) श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।

शब्दादीन्विषयानन्ये इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥

श्रोत्रादीनि	...	the ear and the rest
इन्द्रियाणि	...	senses
अन्ये	...	others
संयमाग्निषु	...	in the fires of restraint
जुह्वति	...	offer as sacrifice
शब्दादीन्	...	sound and the rest
विषयान्	...	sense-objects
अन्ये	...	others

इन्द्रियाग्निषु	...	in the fires of 'senses'
जुहति	...	offer as sacrifice.

"Some offer as sacrifice, the senses, namely, the ear and the rest, into the fires of restraint. Others offer as sacrifice, the sense-objects, namely, sound and the rest, into the fires of the senses."

We were told of those who regard contemplation itself as sacrifice. We were also told of others who pour offerings into *fire* literally understood. Now the Lord proceeds to enumerate other kinds of figurative.

यज्ञः This verse takes up two groups. The first line treats of men who abstain from sense-enjoyments, and who are therefore regarded as pouring the five organs of knowledge into the burning crucibles of restraint. The second line deals with men who pour sense-objects into the organs of knowledge regarded as fires, and thereby enjoy pleasures in the light of a pious sacrifice. These are not abstainers but enjoyers in moderation according to the Shastras and in devotion to God.

Vivriti points out (what Sri Madhwa states in Tatparya) that the word यज्ञेनैव of the last verse must be understood in this and the next verse as an adverbial qualification of the predicate. यज्ञेन denotes "worshipful reliance or under the guidance of God." This qualification is very important. It is this feature that converts abstinence or enjoyment into a sacrifice. Otherwise, the hungry serpent that finds no food may be engaged in यज्ञ, in and so likewise, is every pleasure-seeker

who seizes hold of enjoyable objects and pours them into the ever-kindled organs of sense. To obviate such a serious misconception, the limitation is inevitable that the sacrificer spoken of is a believer in God, and this thoroughly renounced egotism and vanity. It is also essential that he sees the hand of God in every doing of himself or others, and that he places himself absolutely at the disposal of God.

What marks the commentary of Sri Madhwa from those of all the other annotators of this verse, is this qualification that यज्ञेन should be read throughout, and the religious fervour and piety it denotes, should be thoroughly grasped.

Ramanujacharya's note coupled with Desikar's gloss, makes out that the two lines of the text treat of two restraints, *viz.*, (1) restraint of the senses, (2) and the restraint of sense-objects, respectively. To prevent senses from the lurement of objects and bar them against the temptation or domination of pleasures is 'restraint of senses'. To avoid the presence and possible contact of pleasure-giving objects is the restraint noted above as number two. The difference between the two is subtle but clear, One renders pleasure-giving experiences innocuous and the other gives them a wide berth.

In Kathopanishad, it is said that "sense-objects are greater than senses, and that मनः is greater than sense-objects." Desikar quotes this and construes the verse under comment (No.26) and the next verse (27),

as based on this idea and as setting out the restraint of senses first, and then, the restraint (more arduous) of the objects, and in the next verse, the restraint, still more of the mind.

In this presentment, there are some flaws. The second line is supposed to denote one who runs away from sense-objects lest their presence should capture him. The language, however, does not favour this forced interpretation. It speaks of senses being fires and sense-objects being poured into them. It is contact and consumption that is pointedly mentioned, and not avoidance. It is not renunciation that is spoken of in the second line as *fire*, but the senses themselves. Then again, if the first line deals with renunciation and the second line also virtually does the same, the redundancy is clear. For, what is the meaning of avoiding temptation, if it is not by some kind of renunciation?

It hardly matters for our present purpose, whether a man faces pleasure-giving objects and renounces them or runs away from them thereby renouncing them all the same. So far as the point of self-restraint is concerned, the presence or absence of the objects does not matter. Hence in both cases, it is the exerted self-restraint that should be called the *fire*, appropriately. If Sri Krishna meant really to speak of 'avoidance' as the fire mentioned in the second line, He would have expressed Himself so, instead of calling the senses (इन्द्रियाणि) themselves by that name (Fire).

It may be observed that Desikar himself is evidently not unconscious of this difficulty. He therefore puts forward an alternative interpretation to this effect that the first line deals with the restraint consisting of 'avoidance,' and the second line of nullifying the effect of sense-contacts. It may be admitted that this interpretation follows the language more literally. But what is it to nullify sense-contacts? If the idea is that sense-contacts are avoided, the objection holds good as before.

If it be meant that the sacrificer does enjoy objects, but, for some reason, his enjoyment becomes pious, then alone is the idea of its being a sacrifice (यज्ञ) properly brought out. This, it will be seen, is the view adopted by Vivriti. It is also the view of Sankara Bhashya that the first line of the verse relates to the Renouncer, and the second line, to the pious enjoyer according to the Shastras.

Among the followers of Sankaracharya, Sridhara and Sankarananda take a certain view of this verse, while Neelakanta, Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha take a different one. The former think that, as verse 25 treated of *Perfect sages*, the present verse refers to non-sages, who lead, in their ignorance, the life of Brahmacharins or house-holders. The first line, according to them, points to the strict life of the Brahmacharin, which, under the Shastras, ought to be one of self-restraint. The second line points to the life of the house-holder, which ought to be one of moderate and regulated enjoyment.

Madhusoodana (whom Venkatanatha simply copies) thinks that the verse describes the life of the advanced sage who is sometimes in prolonged trance and at other times, is wakeful. He allots the first line to the *sage-in-trance* and the second line to the *sage-awake*. The word संयम (restraint) is seized hold of to support this view, that the verse applies, not to ordinary seekers or seers, but only to the foremost sages whose self-realization is so perfect and so intense as to enable them to spend months and years in total unconsciousness with occasional breaks of wakeful periods. In the Yoga Shastra of Patanjali, संयम is a technical term denoting three psychological states known as धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि. These three words denote concentration of mind in different degrees of intensity. The first line of the text, therefore, applies to sages who withdraw their senses from the external world and get absorbed in mental concentration. When they wake up, they indulge in such worldly enjoyments as are not forbidden by the Shastras, and do so in moderation. The former is one kind of यज्ञ (sacrifice) and the latter is another.

It is to be observed that the verse speaks of *fires* (in the plural) in regard to restraints. The restraint of each organ – eye, ear, touch, tongue and nose – is regarded separately, and the plural word is correct having regard to this multiplicity. This is Sankaracharya's explanation of the plural. Madhusoodana thinks that as संयम compresses subdivisions into, धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि the plural des-

ignation of संयमाग्निषु is appropriate. The difference between Sankaracharya's point of view and that of Madhusoodana is worthy of note.

It is very doubtful if the technicality of Patanjali is really contemplated by the Geeta text. The trend of thought is far from similar.

Sri Krishna speaks of the senses being controlled. But ध्यान, धारणा and समाधि are restraints of the *mind*. To the Sanskrit Psychologist, the two things are quite distinct. He will never confound the control of external senses with the control and regulation of mental conditions. Utkarsha Deepika points out this as a vulnerable point against Madhusoodana.

Moreover, the trance of the Yogin implies a cessation of all bodily and mental functions. It is even doubtful if the heart is beating and the lungs are respiring; so complete is the suspended animation. In alluding to such a condition it is difficult to see why Sri Krishna pointedly refers to the organs of knowledge alone (eye, ear, touch, tongue, and nose) and says these are poured into *fires*. The trance of the Yogin requires a more comprehensive sacrifice, and the wording should accordingly be different to convey such a meaning.

Neelakanta is in agreement with Madhusoodana as to the purport of the first line. In interpreting the second line, he diverges into a different course. He says that those who find themselves *unfit for the trance referred to*, succeed in keeping their senses outside

the pale of pleasures, and these are the men spoken of in the second line. Thus, their senses dissociated effectively from objects are like fires which are not sustained by fuel and which get extinguished of their own accord by sheer inanition.

Neelakanta is here obviously forgetting himself. As he has interpreted the first line to mean self-restraint brought on by separating senses from objects and as the purport of the second line comes to the same thing, the redundancy is clear. Sri Krishna obviously means the second line to denote a sacrifice (यज्ञ) other than that of the first line. Utkarsha Deepika criticizes and rejects Neelakanta on this ground. If the fire alluded to in the second line of the text is the fire of dissociating senses from objects, it was inappropriate to call इन्द्रियाणि (senses) by the term 'fires'. The restraints of the several senses or sense-objects should have been named the fires, consistently with the language of the first line.

To sum up briefly, Ramanujacharya and Neelakanta are the only two commentators who look upon the second line of the verse as a description of sense-control or abstinence. Vivriti, Sankaracharya, Sreedhara, Sankarananda and Madhusoodana say that it deals with *enjoyment* rather than *renunciation*, such enjoyment being, of course, limited to authorized pleasures in a moderate degree. Vivriti adds also that they should be pious in character, being dedicated to God and free from vanity and egotism.

27) सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।

आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥

सर्वाणि	...	all
इन्द्रियकर्माणि	...	the operations of the senses (of action)
प्राणकर्माणि	...	the operations of breaths
च	...	and
अपरे	...	others
आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ...		In the fire of mental restraint
जुह्वति	...	sacrifice
ज्ञानदीपिते	...	kindled by knowledge

“Others sacrifice all the work of the senses (organs of action) and the breaths into the fire of mental restraint kindled by knowledge”.

The senses here referred to are the organs of action (कर्मेन्द्रिय). For, the organs of knowledge have been already spoken of in the last verse. The organs of action are those of speech, hands, legs, and the excretory and genitive functions. The work of breaths comprises respiratory functions and other minute muscular movements or operations in the system attributed to gases. Desikar also agrees that the generic term ‘senses’ in the verse should be understood to mean the senses of action only.

The word 'Atma' in the second line means the mind, and it is its restraint that is spoken of as Fire. The organs of action are governed only by the centres of volition. They have no special objects to feed upon like the ear, eye, tongue, touch and nose, which grasp sound, colour, taste, touch and smell, respectively. They are not dominated by any special temptations of pleasures, but are merely slaves at the disposal of the mind. Hence, there is no mention of these organs being sacrificed in the fires of restraint as was said in respect to the senses of knowledge. The restraint of the mind is the only fire into which the action-senses can be poured in sacrifice.

Similarly, the five breaths known as Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana operate more or less involuntarily, but can be regulated and controlled by the will. Hence, these too are referred to as sacrifice in the fire of mental restraint.

The use of अग्रौ in the singular number may be noted. It points to mental restraint as a single unit as contrasted with sense-restraints spoken of in the plural before.

'ज्ञानदीपिते' 'Kindled by knowledge' is an important qualification. It is not to be forgotten that we are not being taught merely the science of breaths and sense-restraints, irrespective of religion. At every step, control is said to be sacrifice in so far as it is associated with religious wisdom. To restrain hands and legs, for instance, is not a sacrifice by itself, for, any cripple

does it, or the drone. If the restraint arises from religious convictions and is adjusted to the requirements of Godly work, it gets sanctified into a sacrifice. The word यज्ञेनैव which is imported from verse No.25 and which is to be read as part of verses 26 and 27, is an exhortation to these doers not to undertake any self-control except by way of a truly conceived religious discipline.

Ramanujacharya dwells on the Upanishadic saying, "Above senses are sense-objects, and above these is the mind". As the last verse related to the senses of knowledge and their respective objects, Sri Krishna proceeds to speak of the Mind in the Upanishadic order of ascending importance. Hence, according to him, there is no redundancy.

Among the commentators of Sankaracharya's school, various explanations have been offered in respect to the relation and sequence of the verses. Sankarananda assigns verse No. 25 to the sage and verses 26 and 27 to the mere seeker. Among seekers, some may be Brahmacharins, others house-holders, and yet others, ascetics (यत्तयः). He assigns the first line of verse 26 to Brahmacharins and the second line to Grihasthas. The present verse (27) is supposed by him to deal with the ascetics.

I cannot help thinking that in order to distinguish and allot these verses or parts thereof on the footing of Asramas, the text should be clearer and more express. There does not seem to be any clue in the language used for ear-marking one verse for

the sage and another for the seeker, or to set down this verse to the bachelor and that, to the householder or ascetic. It is significant that the very verses which Sankarananda assigns to the bachelor, house-holder and ascetic, who are no sages yet but are seekers merely, are applied by his brethren Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha to the foremost adepts among sages (those who practise the divine trance). It is at least an indication that the classification of Sankarananda is arbitrary.

Neelakanta thinks that Yogins are divisible into two classes (1) those of sense-control, and (2) those of mind-control. The former resemble persons plunged in deep sleep. Their mind is not at rest, nor its concomitants, the breaths. The latter have set the breaths and the mind at rest.

According to Neelakanta, the Yogis of self-control were alluded to in the last verse (No. 26) and those of mind-control (together with those of breath-control) are mentioned in the first line of the text under notice. But these two groups do not exhaust the sages. There is the sage higher than these, whose realization of Brahman is complete. He is alluded to in the second line by the words ज्ञानदीपिते 'kindled by knowledge'. To some extent, this agrees with Sankarananda's explanation that verse No. 26 deals with seekers, and the present, with sages.

In my own mind, there is a strong doubt whether, in these two verses (26 & 27) the expressions may not be understooped as far as possible, in the light of

the Yoga Shastras. Patanjali lays down and all have agreed, that Yoga consists of eight stages :—

‘यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयः ॥’

- i. यम — denotes harmlessness, truth, innocence, abstinence, absence of greed, etc.
- ii. नियम — denotes personal cleanliness, contentment, penance, study and meditation of God.
- iii. आसन — Easy postures.
- iv. प्राणायाम — Control of breaths.
- v. प्रत्याहार — Withdrawal of senses from objects, so that they harmonise with the mind.
- vi. धारणा — Concentration.
- vii. ध्यान — Unshaken concentration.
- viii. समाधि — The highest concentration including the trance.

Of these, the first three relate to the organs of action; the fourth relates to breaths. The last four relate to the Mind. The word आत्मा in आत्मसंयम of the verse has been interpreted by Sri Madhwa to stand for the ‘mind’. Hence, the sacrifice consists in the first four stages of Ashtanga Yoga being poured into the next four stages of mental control. ज्ञानदीपिते implies, of course, that the pouring is made in the right spirit so self-surrender and dependence on God.

One feature of difference between the drift of Vedanta and that of Patanjali must be clearly noted. Patanjali admits God into his system with faint-hearted reluctance. He includes devotion as one of the component parts of नियम. Like personal cleanliness and the rest, divine meditation is one of the lower stages, according to him. Elsewhere, he says, the highest stage may be reached either through the steps he names, or through Divine meditation. The alternative denoted by 'or' is significant. The Yogin may attain perfection by focusing his mind on any object or even a vacuum. But he has the option of choosing God as the object of concentration. Thus opines Patanjali.

True Vendanta does not bear to relegate God into subsidiary importance. It holds that the eight stages of Yoga are but vain gymnastics unless they are associated with God. The methods, the means and the end, should be saturated with godly thoughts. God should be understood *the doer* throughout, and the goal as well. The angle of vision is thus different between Patanjali and Vedanta with this difference duly remembered. Patanjali's definition of technical terms may, it seems to me, be held applicable. It is true that Sri Madhwa has not said so. But in Vivriti under verse 26, the author says "they control the senses by प्रत्याहार and the rest." 'प्रत्याहार and the rest' is to me suggestive.

It is Madhusoodana (whom Venkatanatha has simply copied wholesale) that has borrowed largely

from Patanjali and applied it to the verses of this context. He puts it thus: "According to the Yoga Shastras, Samadhi is either deep trance or wakeful abstraction. The last verse 26 dealt with these two conditions, the first line speaking of deep trance and the second of the wakeful dreamer. The present verse looks at Samadhi from the standpoint of Adwaita Vedanta. In Monism, the process of emancipation is reached by gradual steps. The seeker proceeds from effects to causes, rearing every effect as untrue and non-existing except in the form of its cause. This is the well-known lesson of वाचरंभण S'ruti.

Thus proceeding from gross matter to subtle, the seeker reaches the ultimate condition of matter — the subtlest sheath of Hiranyagarbha. It consists of the 10 senses, five Pranas, and the mind and Reason, — seventeen elements in all. This is the Linga Sarira. This is realized to be false and offered up in Brahman (आत्मा). Until this offering is made, the Samadhi is no more than a temporary absorption, the seed not being yet burnt up. Until this takes place, the potential possibility of wakefulness and re-birth continues. This latent possibility expires only with the realization of Unity. Thus सवीजसमाधि must give rise to निर्बीजसमाधि. The last verse spoke of लय and व्युत्थान. But these are not the Vedantic stages of emancipation. आत्मसंयम denotes all but the highest stages of the Vedanta. योग is the ripened stage of Unity, when all is quiescent."

In connection with this long note, it is to be said that it teems with the technology of Monism, which is not acceptable to other systems of theism. The Sruti of वाचारंभण which is one of the bed-rocks of Monism, like तत्त्वमसि, is, by us, interpreted quite differently. The proposition that all effects are unreal, and that, proceeding upon this line of elimination from effects to causes, the ultimate alone, *viz.*, Brahman, is reached, like the mother-of-pearl of the silver illusion, is, of course, not assented to at all. It is needless to pursue this general line of criticism.

But I must point out that what is said by Madhusoodana that the last verse of the Geeta (verse No.26) treats the subject in the light of Patanjali's system, while the present verse treats it according to Vedanta, is unconvincing. Sri Krishna calls the contents of the last verse a sacrifice (यज्ञ). So does he call the subject of the present verse. He goes on thus and concludes in verse 30, "All these are knowers of sacrifice, and, by sacrifice, have destroyed sins," and in verse 32, "Many and various are the sacrifices rendered great by dedication to Brahman." Surely, Sri Krishna will not call Patanjali's yoga a sacrifice even where it differs from His own Vedanta. Hence, the correct view to take is that Sri Krishna is setting out only sacrifices approved by Him and acceptable to Vedanta, and that He does not condescend to sanctify an unacceptable Patanjala tenet into an emancipatory sacrifice. It is also to be observed, that, if this verse contemplates the pouring, in a figurative sense, of

the entire Universe into Brahman, the redundancy is obvious in respect to verse 25 at least. Although Madhusoodana gets rid of the tautology with reference to verse No. 26 by calling it Patanjali's system explained, he makes no endeavour to explain away verse No. 25 *second half*, which this author interpreted on exactly the same lines as the present one.

28) द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥

द्रव्ययज्ञाः	...	sacrificers by means of wealth
तपोयज्ञाः	...	sacrificers by penance
योगयज्ञाः	...	sacrificers by meditation
तथा	...	so
अपरे	...	others
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाः...		sacrificers by study and wisdom
च	...	and
यतयः	...	workers
संशितव्रताः	...	of rigid observance

"Among workers of rigid observance, some are sacrificers by wealth, others by penance or yoga—others again, by study or wisdom."

There are five kinds of sacrificers enumerated here. (1) द्रव्ययज्ञाः The first group comprises those who

part with wealth liberally for useful, charitable, and religious objects. They spend well in holy places and shrines, and look upon charity as duty done for the sake of God and as a mode of His worship. This is a very popular form of sacrifice (यज्ञ) known to every Hindu. On every conceivable occasion, auspicious or inauspicious, every Hindu is expected to make gifts in coin or kind to deserving recipients. Public chatrams, temples, rest-houses, water-sheds, and eleemosynary institutions, have always abounded in this country, except that, of late, a new civilization has somewhat altered old standpoints and introduced new angles of vision.

Madhusoodana divides religious charities of this class into three groups :—

(I) Those which are strictly यज्ञs whose performance is set out and governed by the Vedas. This group was treated of in verse 25.

(II) & (III) Those which, being charities, indirectly or directly, convey comforts, cash or benefits, to fellow beings, which are known by the expressions पूर्त and दत्त, which are prescribed by the Smritis, Public tanks, wells, temples, feeding, flower-gardens, or rest-houses, are called पूर्त. These are benefits conferred wholesale on the public or large sections thereof. Protection of refugees, abstaining from any injury to fellow-beings, and gifts to the public, apart from special presents in connection with Yagas, are known as दत्त. Madhusoodana points out that the verse under

comment refers to charities Nos. (II) and (III) above described, by the expression. द्रव्ययज्ञाः.

(2) तपोयज्ञाः The next group of sacrificers comprises persons who look on self-denial as a piece of sacrifice and worship. Men and women may be counted by thousands in India, who fast on specific days and occasions, and undergo penances of a very taxing character, with no worldly object in view. If undertaken and carried out in a truly religious spirit, they are sacrifices. In chapter XVII, Sri Krishna gives examples of (1) bodily sacrifice, (2) sacrifice in speech and (3) mental sacrifice. To serve God, Dwijas, the preceptor, and the learned, to keep oneself personally clean, to be self-denying as a bachelor in a liberal sense, and to refrain from harm, is bodily penance. Gentility in words, truth-speaking, softness, agreeableness, and study of what one ought to know, is penance of speech. A clear mind, cheerful and pleasing, taciturnity, control of thoughts and wishes, purity of motive—these are penances of the mind.

(3) योगयज्ञाः The next group consists of sacrifices by 'Yoga'. This difficult word *Yoga* is one with whose manifold significance we are fairly familiar. In the Bhagavad Geeta, it often means an unselfish performance of duty. Not infrequently, it means fixity of thought in God, meditation or devotion. Most commentators of the Sankara-school turn to the *Yoga Shashtra* of Patanjali and adopt the technical definition and description therein given of this term. Madhusoodana says that the first three stages of

Ashtangayoga, viz., यम, नियम and आसन are contemplated by the word योग here. He allots प्रत्याहार, धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि, to verse 26. He assigns प्राणायाम to verse 29 (the next one), and the remaining three यम, नियम, and आसन to the present verse as just stated. The arbitrary character of this classification has been already adverted to.

(4) स्वाध्याययज्ञाः The next group comprises those who apply themselves whole-heartedly to study. It may be said with some degree of pride, that lovers of knowledge for its own sake and especially so of religion and philosophy, abound in India more than anywhere else. It is here that thousands of persons take to the study of the Vedas and the Shastras with devotion, and Sri Krishna calls it a true sacrifice, if the study be free from mercenary aims and is undertaken as a duty and a worship.

(5) ज्ञानयज्ञाः Connected with the last, are those who have passed the stage of initial scholarship and are mature in learning. Their knowledge is sacrifice, and the higher fruits of their luminous learning is their way of Divine worship. To distinguish group No. 4 from number 5, Sankarananda thinks that the former refers to the large body of Vedic reciters found in India who know the Vedas or sections of them by heart but who seldom trouble themselves about their meaning. It seems to me that mere recitation can hardly be said to possess sufficient importance to be classed on a level

with the various sacrifices enumerated in this context. It savours of mechanical labour to a large extent, with memory alone brought into play.

The verse ends by calling the sacrifices यतयः which word ordinarily means 'ascetics', but which is unanimously construed here to mean 'those who exert hard.' There is no difficulty in taking this word in an adjectival sense to qualify the five groups of sacrificers above mentioned. 'संशितव्रताः' denotes persons of rigid observance. This too is a qualification governing the same five groups of sacrificers. All are agreed in this construction except Madhusoodana.

This annotator thinks that 'यतयस्संशितव्रताः' mentions a sixth group of sacrificers. In the Yoga Shastra, there is found a description of self-denial (महाव्रत) which consists in the practice of यम in an acute form. यम, it may be remembered, comprises (1) non-injury to life, (2) truthfulness, (3) greedlessness, (4) continence and (5) contentment. Everyone of these virtues admits of being practised in a high degree or low. If the observer confines the practice to circumscribed limits of time, place, persons or circumstance, he is a narrow practitioner of penance. But if he adheres to the observance with rigidity and carries out his self-denials irrespective of time, place, persons or circumstance, then he is called in the Yoga Shastra by the name of महाव्रतः. What is understood by the distinction may be made clear by remembering some concrete instances. One who leads a harmless life may

kill victims in a duly performed sacrifice. A fisherman may avoid all animal food but fishes. Vows may be observed in respect to specific shrines or stated periods of the year or month.

Thus with regard to the five constituents of यम, observances may be narrow or universal. Those who make the observance universal, are the persons referred to, according to Madhusoodana, by the phrase 'यतयस्संशितव्रताः'. In his view, they form a distinct group by themselves, so that these words are no adjectives governing the five groups before stated.

The reasoning of Madhusoodana is subtle but not convincing. No other commentator has adopted this view that the last phrase of the verse stands for a distinct group of sacrificers. It may be seen that the word यज्ञ is found repeated four times in the verse, and Sri Krishna has used the word repeatedly wherever and whenever he contemplated a distinct sacrifice. Madhusoodana has, in this very verse, interpreted योग to stand for यम, नियम and आसन. This being so, why Sri Krishna should pick out यम alone and lay stress on an acute performance thereof as a sacrifice of special importance and denomination, it is difficult to see. Every observance adverted to in this verse, admits of degrees, and there is no ground to mark out one out of them for special emphasis and notice. The words in question give a clear meaning, if broadly and literally understood. Beyond the doubtful advantage of consistency with Patanjali's technology, no

other significance is perceivable in this ingenious deviation from all other commentators. The author of Utkarsha has sharply criticized Madhusoodana on this point.

29) अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥

अपाने	...	In the incoming breath
जुह्वति	...	pour as sacrifice
प्राणं	...	the out-going breath
प्राणे	...	in the out-going breath
अपानं	...	the incoming breath
तथा	...	so
अपरे	...	others
प्राणापानगती	...	the courses of the out-going and in-coming breaths
रुद्ध्वा	...	obstructing
प्राणायामपरायणाः...		Intent on breath-control

"Others, intent on breath-control, obstruct the courses of the out-going and incoming breaths, and pour as sacrifices, the out-going breath into the incoming one, and the incoming breath into the out-going one too."

Here is a brief allusion to the practice of breath-control, on which the Yoga Shastra of Patanjali has

laid great value. Respiration is, of course, a function of life, indispensable for purifying the blood-system of the body and sustaining vital energy. In addition to inhaling and exhaling air, the Yoga Shastra points out that retention of breath by resisting the expiration and inspiration of air, is an important exercise, especially for those who wish to develop introspection. To inhale air is said to be पूरकः; to exhale is रेचक; to restrain both and retain is कुंभक.

Sri Madhwa points out in Tantrasara that प्राणायाम, truly speaking, consists of कुंभक alone. Mere exhaling and inhaling do not constitute breath-control, but are only acts of respiration. The regulation and control of breaths involves restraints of the incoming and out-going processes. Without exhaling resisted and inhaling also resisted, retention (कुंभक) is not possible. Hence, this last one alone is प्राणायाम, while the other two are only inevitable steps for achieving it. Therefore the gist of the verse is that persons intent on कुंभक stop and control the out-going and incoming breaths and pour these two into one another so as to neutralize them and bring about a stop.

Sankaracharya and many of his disciples read the verse as consisting of three distinct predications which are:— (1) some pour Prana into Apana (inhale). This is one प्राणायाम. (2) Others pour Apana into Prana (exhale). (3) Others again restrain both and do

Kumbhaka. Thus the verse speaks of three Pranayamas, according to them. In respect to कुम्भक spoken of in the second line, there is, it may be noted, no word to denote 'sacrifice' as in the first line. The line is construed to state merely that *some do practice Kumbhaka*. The distinction between this and Sri Madhwa's rendering is that the latter makes the whole a single sentence, the idea being that persons practising *Pranayama* do so by the control of *Prana* and *Apana*, while the Sankaras split the verse into three separate sentences. In Sri Madhwa's meaning जुह्वति is the main verb governing the nominative. प्राणायामपरायणाः. In Sankaracharya's rendering, this last named nominative has no verb stated in the verse, and one has to be supplied by implication so that the clause may read "some are प्राणायामपरायणाः".

The objections to the interpretation of the Sankara-school are : (1) that प्राणायाम is not threefold as they put it, but is single consisting only of regulated breath, the regulation involving stoppage of incoming and outgoing breaths, and (2) that the nominative word in the second line is left without a predicate and a feeble substitute is found which does not denote a sacrifice as uniformity of predication in the whole of this context would seem to demand.

In order to meet the second of these two objections, Ramanujacharya and Madhusoodana tack the first line of the next verse (verse No.30) with the second line of the present verse, and make out a full sentence

of the two lines so tacked and coupled. The meaning given is "Men of regulated food restrain breaths, and, in attaining कुंभक, pour senses into breaths as sacrifice." Except these two commentators (and Venkatanatha who simply copies Madhusoodana), all the others regard the present verse (No. 29) as complete in itself and interpret verse No. 30 as laying down a distinct sacrifice by itself.

Madhusoodana has a long note here, dwelling much on the details discussed in Patanjali's Yoga. Breath-control (प्राणायाम) according to him, is primarily three-fold: (1) रेचक = Exhaling, (2) पूरक = Inhaling and (3) कुंभक = retention.

This last (Retention कुंभक) is of two kinds: a) Internal and (b) external. The retention that follows inhaling is internal. That which follows exhaling is external. These two kinds of *kumbhaka* are necessarily associated with पूरक and रेचक and are largely dependent thereon. The said *Kumbhakas*, internal and external, are also measurable by units of time and space, as lasting so long and extending so far, etc. Thus the Retention of Breath कुंभक divisible, dependent, and measurable, as aforesaid, is the Pranayama next higher than रेचक and पूरक, and may be marked the *third* of the Pranayamas. Madhusoodana points out that all these three might be read into the first line itself of the Geeta verse under comment. For, the text speaks of inhaling and

exhaling, and these two may be taken to include the कुंभक too above set out as the third *Pranayama*.

Thus the sacrifice consisting of the first three *Pranayamas* being disposed of in the first line, the second line of this verse coupled with the first line of the succeeding verse describes a fourth *Pranayama* also called कुंभक. This last marks a step higher in the discipline and practice of breath-control. The Yogin who has reached this, puts himself into breathlessness *at will*, like an automaton, without effort. He does not call into service any process of inhaling and exhaling as preliminary and precedent to the practice of holding up breath.

He has no need to measure and calculate, having passed that stage. He has arrived at the point whence his translation to the stage of Samadhi (trance) is easy. Having set out this fourth *Pranayama* or Kumbhaka thus, Madhusoodana proceeds to read it into the text. As this class of adepts should be extremely sparing in food, they are so described in verse 30. The highly efficient control of breaths enables this adept to subdue his senses, these being virtually poured into the breaths which are blocked up.

Struck apparently with the ingenuity of this rendering, Venkatanatha simply copies Madhusoodana's commentary as his own.

The reader may observe that there are a few weak points in this interpretation. (1) Whereas the first line of the text (N0. 29) speaks of रेचक and पूरक

only, Madhusoodana wishes us to include कुंभक also (the lower कुंभक as we may call it) in that line by *implication*. This involves a forced construction. (2) His object in including the lower कुंभक in the first line by implication is to release the second line for the higher कुंभक on which he harps. But the language of the text lends no support or basis for the distinction of a *lower* and a *higher* Kumbhaka.

The word प्राणायाम in the second line is quite general and comprehensive. It does not emote the higher 'Kumbhaka' alone. The words of the next verse too, speaking of regulated food and subdued senses, are not more helpful for the construction wished for; because, no control of breaths, lower or higher, is possible without restricted diet and subjugation of senses. There is thus no clue that Sri Krishna had in mind the classification and distinctions elaborated by Patanjali and meant an allusion thereto in the text.

(3) Even Sankara Bhashya, speaking as it does, of *three* Pranayamas, does not speak of the lower and higher कुंभक as Madhusoodana does, does not connect the next verse as part and parcel of the present one, and does not read any कुंभक in the first line of the text by implication or otherwise.

Sankarananda also thinks it prudent not to force the text into line with Patanjali's expositions. Like Sri Madhwa, he takes the verse as complete in itself and deems it needless to drag the next verse here

for any grammatical or logical requirement. He also takes the verse as a single predication, and his rendering may be stated thus: "others who are aspirants to मुक्ति, resist the exhaling and inhaling of air and pour them into each other as sacrifice thus, by harmonizing and neutralizing the two currents, the infirmities (पापं) of the nerves and vessels through out the system are burnt up." There is no reason to take exception to this interpretation. Moreover, it is simply an expression of Sri Madhwa's meaning in other words.

But Sankarananda suggests another construction also. He says the meaning may be this: "They inhale; then they practice Kumbhaka, and doing so, they exhale."

The point in this rendering is not clear. If it be meant that inhaling, retention and exhaling, follow in regular order there is no force in making such a plain physiological statement. 'Kumbhaka' moreover, is neutralization and harmonization of both the incoming and outgoing breaths and is not associated with 'inhaling' alone.

It may be observed that a mere control of breaths as a kind of lung-exercise is only a secular process. As such, its relevancy and importance in a system of religion or spiritual philosophy is not apparent. Sri Madhwa points out elsewhere that kumbhaka is of two kinds, — (1) It may be merely physical in character, not resting on a focus such as divine

meditation; (2) on the other hand, it may rest on God as a contemplated centre and hover round it as the pivot-point of all control. The former is, of course, of little value except as preliminary discipline. The latter is the true means of God-vision and salvation. True प्राणायाम therefore comprises divine meditation as the focus on which, and for which, breaths and senses are withdrawn and controlled.

In the light of these observations, the reader may here mark the expression प्राणायामपरायणाः. It means Pranayama resorted to as the *great* refuge. It is *great* only if practised in the right spirit of religion and not as a piece of physical exercise only. In the idea of sacrifice throughout this context, it has been pointed out more than once, that God should not be excluded from consideration, but should be taken as the central factor and element of the course. In perfect consistency therewith, and understanding the value of breath-control as a religious exercise, it is desirable and necessary that controllers of breath should invariably associate their exercise with Divine Meditation.

There is no ceremonial or religious observance that may be rightly gone through without Pranayama at the outset. Too often, it is gone through as a mere routine, the doer not caring even to take his fingers to the nose. Very often, the priest repeats the mantras (ओं, भूः &c) rapidly, and he is simply tolerated. But his mechanical Pranayama is hardly of use. To take long breaths of air is a most valuable physiological

exercise. After a deep inspiration and prolonged retention, to expel the whole of the carbonic acid is of value and merit. As often as we perform Sandhyavandana and the many daily religious ceremonies enjoined on every Brahman and reluctantly or willingly adhered to, if we but do our Pranayama faithfully and leisurely, with due prayers to God and mental concentration, even the physique of the community world show a remarkable improvement and exhibit the lustre known of old as ब्रह्मतेजः.

30) अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।
सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ॥

अपरे	...	Others
नियताहाराः	...	abstemious in food
प्राणान्	...	the operations or powers of the senses
प्राणेषु	...	into the senses
जुह्वति	...	pour as sacrifice
सर्वे	...	all
अपि	...	without exception
एते	...	these
यज्ञविदः	...	are knowers of sacrifice
यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः	...	with sins destroyed by sacrifice

“Others are abstemious in food, and thereby, sacrifice sense-operations into the senses. All these, without exception, are knowers of sacrifice, with sins destroyed by sacrifice.”

To stop the entire operation of all the senses is hardly possible in a living person. Hence, the sacrifice here mentioned is a restraint of the functions within the narrowest limit.

It may be objected that, by verse No.26 (chapter IV), the same sacrifice was already stated. For, that verse spoke of the restraint of the senses and sense-objects. Sri Madhwa points out in reply to this objection, that whereas verse 26 spoke of the voluntary withdrawal (प्रत्याहार) of senses and sense-objects, the present verse relates to the conquest of the senses by abstemiousness in eating. It is obvious that one who eats little necessarily reduces to a low limit the functions of all the organs. The sacrifice here is virtually an abandonment of dainties and even of necessities in food, as far as possible, so that all the senses, which, of course, depend on satisfied hunger for the supply of energy, naturally fall into low vitality.

In the text, ‘प्राणाः’ means *senses* and their functions. On this point, Madhusoodana, Neelakanta and Sridhara, agree. Sankaracharya, however, takes it in the literal sense of ‘airs or breaths’. His rendering is, “Others pour unvanquished breaths (airs) into the vanquished ones.” The meaning of this is not very

clear. There is no word in the text to denote the idea of *vanquished* and *unvanquished*. According to this author, the last verse disposed of 'breath-control' in the threefold branches of रेचक, पूरक, and कुंभक. What is the sacrifice of breaths *now* contemplated, which is not covered by the all-inclusive breath-control already spoken of ? This has not been explained in any of the Sankara-commentaries of this verse. Sri Madhwa thinks that the subject of breaths being disposed of by the last verse, a new 'sacrifice' is stated there.

Madhusoodhana, it may be remembered, connects the first line of this verse with the second line of the last one. In his view, although breath-control (प्राणायाम) may be of various kinds, it is the practitioner of the *fourth* कुंभक *alone* that fully sacrifices the senses after a well-nigh total abstention from food.

The author of Utkarsha Deepika takes exception to the construction adopted by Madhusoodana. He objects to the 2nd line of the last verse being linked with the present verse. He also objects to the 'sense-control' being dragged into the subject of 'breath-control'.

Neelakanta construes the sacrifice of प्राणs into प्राणs to mean that all the external senses (ten in number) and the internal one, the Mind, are sacrificed into the faculties of *Will*, *Memory* and *self-consciousness* (मनः, चित्तं and अहंकार).

It is easy enough to see that to sacrifice one thing into another implies a distinction and differentiation of the two things spoken of. Hence, speaking of *Pranas* poured into the *Pranas*, the two words cannot be identical in sense. They must be differentiated somehow. Sankaracharya, therefore, says, one group of breaths (the unvanquished ones) is sacrificed into another group (the vanquished breaths). Sri Madhwa takes the senses and their powers or functioning's as the two things meeting together in the sacrificial contact.

But Neelakanta's interpretation is all right where he differentiates one group of senses from another group. So far, no exception need be taken. But when he speaks of all the senses and the Mind sacrificed into the faculties of *Will*, *Memory*, and *self consciousness*, the idea is unintelligible. Mind includes these three faculties and two more (बुद्धि and चेतना). It is difficult to see the justification for choosing three out of the five divisions that Hindu Psychologists speak of, and for looking upon Mind (taken as a collection of the five) as sacrificed into three of its own branches.

Sridhara offers two constructions. One is more or less similar to that of Sri Madhwa.

The other may be summed up thus:— The last verse is taken as connected with the present one. It may be recollected that the last verse deals with the *incoming breath* and *outgoing breath* in the first line. The respiratory function of all animals carries with it an esoteric significance. The outgoing breath emanates from the mouth and nostril with a hiss

(sound of स). The incoming breath enters and dives, with the sound 'Ham', (हं). They meet hundreds or thousands of times every day in the body. This process is an involuntary utterance of हंस Mantra. We do not consciously utter any Vedic or other word, as people doing जप utter with or without beads. But the 'Ham' sound and the 'Sa' hiss are there, making up an involuntary हंस Mantra. Following as they do in quick succession, हं and स read in the reverse order give us सो and हं. It means तत्त्वमसि in other words — an acknowledgment and realization of Jeeva and Brahman being one.

According to Sridhara, the first line of verse 29 speaking of inhaled air and exhaled air denotes all this, and points out that the breathing animal utters a Mantra which, in effect, is the realization of Monism.

The second line of verse No.29 is interpreted by Sridhara somewhat on the lines of Madhusoodana, connecting it, of course, with the first line of the present text. In these two lines alone (second line of verse No.29 and the first of verse No. 30) it is said, breath-control (प्राणायाम) is spoken of. As this consists only of *Kumbhaka*, all the senses are supposed to meet only there, the stoppage of breaths reacting on the senses and bringing about the cessation of their work.

The author of Utkarsha Deepika criticizes Sridhara. He brushes aside all that is said about हंस

and सोहं as being not readable into the language of the text and being contrary to Sankara Bhashya. It is fairly clear that a great deal of the exposition relating to हंस and सोहं looks fanciful. No doubt, all animals do breathe, and, in so doing, sounds are occasionally produced which imagination compares with हं and स. But surely this involuntary function does not mean that Jeeva and Brahman are one. If any one should give such a meaning to his own respiration, he is not only a dreamer but a very mistaken one.

Moreover, Sridhara guards us against the supposition that the theory of respiration explained as हंस and सोहं is a kind of breath-control प्राणायाम; for, he alludes only to the ordinary *inhaling and exhaling* said to be gone through by every animal 21,600 times a day. There is no idea of 'control' implied in this. The 'breath-control' that constitutes a sacrifice is, however, taken up in the second line of verse 29 and the first line of the present verse 30. This is not to be confused with the esoteric significance given to mere breathing on the theory of हंस Mantra.

This being so, respiration as हंस and सोहं being no sacrifice, what becomes of the word जुहति used in the text? If no sacrifice be therein contemplated, why should the respiratory functions be spoken of here at all? The whole context is an enumeration of sacrifices one after another. In their midst, it is irrelevant to thrust in, a line of Monism, by some

fancied onomatopoeic similarity of sounds. That the language of the text allows no room at all for this piece of speculative philosophy is the chief objection pointed out by Utkarsha Deepika, and the objection coming, as it does, from a brother member of the Sankara-school, is specially forcible.

To revert to Sri Madhwa's interpretation of the text, it may be noted that he furnishes an alternative rendering too. 'Those who fast and thereby subdue the senses are doers of a sacrifice' is his first interpretation. In the alternative, he takes, 'fast' as a sacrifice by itself. The pouring of *Pranas* into *Pranas* is *another* sacrifice. This means that lower *Pranas* are poured into the higher. That is to say, the lower deities governing some of the senses are controlled by the higher deities presiding over the higher and subtler senses. A full conviction of this gradation and the involution based on it, is indispensable for the true sacrificer.

To some extent, Neelakanta perceives the appropriateness of the construction that one group of senses is poured into another and a higher group. But he does not go far enough. Sri Madhwa points out that the gradation of the presiding deities is contemplated herein and quotes the Vedic text "यच्छे-द्राङ्मनसीप्राज्ञः" as authority for his view.

In respect to the second line of the text, there is not much to be said. It says "they are , everyone of them without exception, doers of sacrifice. They

are persons cleansed of sin by their sacrifice.” Here is a clue to the true import of the word य. It will be a layman’s definition of the word, if it be understood in a godless sense. To fast, for example, is said to be a sacrifice. The famine-stricken serpent fasts away, when food is not available. There is no sacrificial merit in this. It is only one who voluntarily abandons what is his own, because it is his duty to do so and it is God’s will he should do so, that deserves credit as a sacrificer. It is only then that self-control can be a cleanser of sins, and not otherwise. Sri Krishna is obviously alluding to this religious aspect, here, and in the whole context.

31) यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजः ...	Those who partake of sacrificial remnants
यान्ति ...	go to
ब्रह्म ...	brahman
सनातनं ...	eternal
न ...	not
अयं ...	this
लोकः ...	world
अस्ति ...	there is
अयज्ञस्य ...	to the non-sacrificer

कुतः	...	whence
अन्यः	...	the other
कुरुसत्तम	...	O ! best of Kurus

“Those who partake of sacrificial remnants go to Brahman, the eternal. To the non-sacrificer, there is not even this world; whence comes the other? O! best of Kurus.”

Having spoken of twelve or more Yagnas, Sri Krishna praises the performer and censures the non-doer. Moksha itself is said to be the reward of sacrifices. This may be attained directly or indirectly, according to circumstances. But for Neelakanta's comment, no doubt will be felt as to what are the sacrifices referred to, whose remnants are said to be so efficacious. As a large number of यज्ञs have just been mentioned from verse No.25 on wards, they are naturally praised at the end.

But Neelakanta thinks that the present verse relates to those who find themselves incompetent to do any of the sacrifices enumerated. To them, the verse says, according to him, “do *the five great yagnas*.” Their remnants will take you to Heaven. If you do not perform the यज्ञs enumerated or the five great यज्ञs too, then you are doomed. There is neither this world nor the next for you.”

The five Yagnas known as *the great पञ्चमहायज्ञाः* are those done for the propitiation of Gods, of Rishis,

of Pitris (ancestors), of spirits (Bhootas), and of guests. Offerings have to be made by the Brahmin every day for these purposes.

Neelakanta's interpretation is obviously untenable for two reasons. (1) If the Five Great Yagnas are new Yagnas not included in the enumerated list, then there is nothing in the verse to show that Sri Krishna is alluding to them. Having spoken of specified Yagnas, where He speaks of *Yagna-remnants*, it is but common-sense that the Yagnas referred to are those just mentioned before. To leave them alone and import other Yagnas not mentioned or thought of, especially in the absence of any word to suggest the same, is clearly indefensible and wrong. (2) The second reason is that Neelakanta errs in thinking that the पञ्चमहायज्ञाः he is alluding to, do not fall within the enumerated list.

The comprehensive words used such as दैवयज्ञ and द्रव्ययज्ञ include 'the five great Yagnas' clearly enough. There is no need or reason to exclude them from the list and construe the text as separately referring to them. The author of Utkarsha Deepika rejects Neelakanta's construction on these grounds.

अमृतं is a word of note-worthy significance. According to the lexicon, it means the nectar, water, ghee, milk, food, and whatever is agreeable. It means food that is obtained unasked and the remnants left of a sacrifice. Here we are concerned only with the last of the lexicon meanings.

Under verse No.24, there is a long note based on a quotation from Chandogyopanishad, which sanctifies dinner as a sacrament and calls on the eater to make offerings to Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Sankarshana, Vasudeva, and Narayana, before he proceeds to take the meal. Every Brahmin does this, more or less, very mechanically. If done in the proper spirit, the rest of the food that is available becomes the sacrificial remnant called अमृत, and sanctity attaches to what would otherwise be but a secular proceeding.

In connection with the sacrifices where articles like rice, ghee, and honey, play a part, it is conceivable that there should be remnants capable of consumption as अमृत, But in Sri Krishnā's list, there are Yagnas understood in a larger sense. It includes, for example, worship of every kind, — prayers, self-control, restraint of the senses and mind, study, knowledge, meditation and breath-control. These hardly leave tangible remnants.

In respect to these, अमृत very probably connotes a different idea. Those who do these sacrifices allot a specific period of time for the performance. Other hours when they are disengaged, are called अमृत. It is the leisure snatched from these intangible sacrifices, that deserves to be called अमृत, and the devotee in question eats his legitimate food only in that period. His merit lies in doing holy work and then turning to the calls of hunger and thirst only at other periods

not so devoted or engaged. Sankaracharya construes अमृत in this sense alone, as being a reference to time and not to physical remnants at all. But there is no reason to exclude the idea of 'physical remnants' altogether. It may mean both, according as either may be appropriate, as shown above. Sankarananda construes the word in the double sense.

The second line of the text denies both this world and the next, to one who does not engage in यज्ञ. Ramanajucharya understands by the next world a reference to Moksha only (final emancipation).

Necessarily then, 'this world' stated by way of distinction includes everything else, all that is looked on as a boon or blessing on Earth or in Swarga, or elsewhere, except Moksha.

Other commentators, however, understand this world to be the Earth, and the 'next world' to denote the future conditions or worlds that the dead are said to attain or reach.

The statement that the non-sacrificer does not derive the benefits even of this world deserves to be noted. One who does not worship God but revels in atheism or agnosticism can hardly find or enjoy mental peace. One who does not control his senses and thoughts will find the world too hot for him and his own ceaseless pursuit of joys a wild-goose chase. One who will not part with wealth for any objects of charity will soon be on the road to be a confirmed Shylock. He who believes in no fasts or abstinence soon comes

to suffer the civilized diseases of over-eating and dyspepsia.

One who is incessantly engaged in frivolous pursuits, with little or no time for meditation, must soon face a mind that is rusty and incompetent for serious study. Pranayama, the last but not the least, of the Yagnas enumerated, is , even from a layman's stand-point, the best preventive remedy for consumption. This world has no place for anyone who will not freely give and take.

The selfish man can never thrive in any society, with no impulses or instincts developed in him but those of animal nature. Even in the Chandogya Upanishad passage alluded to, they promise offspring, cattle, wealth, and wisdom to the sacrifice (प्रजयापशुभिरन्नाद्येनतेजसाब्रह्मवर्चसेनेति), thereby censuring the non-sacrificer by implication, that he deserves not even the blessings of the secular world.

Vidura says in Udyoga Parva, "Two persons deserve to be let down into the sea with stones tied to their necks. They are the rich man who will not give, and the poor man who will not do penance.

"These six things should be abandoned by every person like a ship that has struck a hole. They are the preceptor who will not teach, the student who will not study, the king who will not protect, the wife who is ever bitter in words, the cowherd who will not leave the village (for grazing the cows) and the barber who loves the forest."

Some of these examples are queer. But the general sense is clear. It insists on every member of the community to do his duty and cheerfully bear his share of the unhappiness, inconvenience, or sufferings, that the lot may entail.

32) एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥

एवं	...	Thus
बहुविधाः	...	are of many kinds
यज्ञाः	...	sacrifices
वितताः	...	are spread out
ब्रह्मणः	...	of Brahman
मुखे	...	in the mouth
कर्मजान्	...	They result from the activity of body, mind and speech
विद्धि	...	know
तान्	...	them
सर्वान्	...	all
एवं	...	Thus
ज्ञात्वा	...	knowing
विमोक्ष्यसे	...	you will be free

“Thus sacrifices are many and various in the mouth of Brahman out-spread. Know them all as born

of the activity of body, mind or speech. Thus knowing, you will be free.”

We may take the last clause first. It is declared that to know every sacrifice as arising out of some external or internal activity leads to salvation. The appropriateness of this observation may not be very clear at first. There is no doubt that God-vision followed by Divine grace is the immediate means of salvation. Is it meant to lay down anything inconsistent with this fundamental tenet? No. It is only indirectly that other truths properly realized lead to spiritual knowledge and God-vision by purifying the mind and enabling the devotee to choose and perform the right sort of work in the right spirit. What Arjuna is taught now is that every kind of sacrifice is a kind of internal or external activity.

This is made with reference to the possible doubt that there may be sacrifices such as knowledge, worship or prayer, which consist not to action or work, and Arjuna might choose some one of those sacrifices not involving action and work. The Lord replies, ‘all of them is work.’ The meaning is, “you cannot choose for adoption any sacrifice that is not work, that is not the result of some activity, be it of mind, body or speech. Hence, if you give up your dutiful line of action and adopt asceticism, you are still pursuing a line of work and are not out of the pale of action.

The nett result will be that, in giving up your military duties, you will only be abandoning what is your Dharma, without, in any way, achieving your

primary object of avoiding action. Hence you have to realize the lesson that all sacrifices are but actions. Once you do this, the road to salvation is open and clear, You will see no reason to prefer any kind of work to battle. Doing duty in the right spirit you will certainly go onward in the path of spiritual progress, and therefore, you will, of your own choice and wish, engage in battle and resolve to obtain knowledge and emancipation through the performance of selfless Dharma."

Sankaracharya and his disciples explain this line (second line) differently. They put it thus :— "All sacrifices are actions. Being so, they are all non-spiritual and material. They are all false and constitute fetters. Know them thus and discard them. Thus knowing and discarding, you will be free by means of Monism."

According to this school, the object of saying that all sacrifices are actions is to give every kind of sacrifice, be it internal or external, a wide berth.

Sri Madhwa's point of view is, as already stated, that all sacrifices are but forms of action, and there is no object or purpose in giving up military duties. Sankaracharya's point of view is that, as all sacrifices are but actions, Arjuna should give up all *en bloc*. The obvious result of the latter interpretation will be for Arjuna retiring at once from the battle-field.

In the first line of the verse also, some difficulty of interpretation has been felt. The school of

Sankaracharya take ब्रह्मणः to mean the Vedas. They take the verse to say that the many and various sacrifices adverted to are of Vedic authority. It is meant, according to them, to allay the possible doubt or objection that, of the sacrifices named, some might be of heretic origin. The Lord sets this at rest by relying on the Vedas as his authority.

It is all very well for the Lord to think of quoting authority for his lesson at this juncture. There was not, however, very much of need for it at present.

In the second line, be it remembered, they said, Sri Krishna meant to throw overboard actions of every sort or kind as calculated to fetter us. If these are referred to in the first line as based on, and proclaimed by, the Vedas, the conclusion is unavoidable that actions, supported as they are by the Vedas, should be cast away. In casting away *Karma*, the Vedas also get cast away. The Lord undoubtedly might have spared Himself the trouble of quoting Vedic authority only to make it the subject of contemptuous repudiation.

It is therefore more appropriate to take the word ब्रह्मणः here as pointing to 'the Supreme Being.' He is truly यज्ञभुक् 'the devourer of every kind of sacrificial food.' He is ever engaged in tasting and enjoying the subtlest sweetness of everything gross or subtle. Sacrifices are innumerable vast, because the Supreme Being exists in the Universe and beyond, ever tasting the sacrificial essence in the Universe.

वितताः ब्रह्मणोमुखे means “expanded in the mouth of God.”

The word मुख = ‘mouth’ is peculiarly appropriate in speaking of God being the eater of the sacrificial essence.

The phrase वितता ब्रह्मणोमुखे points to another beautiful idea. It points out that any sacrifice produces infinite results, if and when, dedicated to Him. We may have very little to offer as oblation unto him. But whatever little we do, becomes highly magnified and enlarged, when it is worshipfully set down at His feet. The innumerable worldly pursuits that man is ever engaged in, become sanctified sacrifices, if and when we realize the Divine Hand therein and dedicate them unto Him.

In Vana Parva there is a fine story that may be remembered in this connection. Duryodhana requested Doorvasa Rishi to go to the Pandavas in the forest and beg of them food at an unusual hour i.e., after Droupadi had eaten and cleansed the Akshaya Patra. This patra or vessel was serviceable for only a single meal every day and could not be of use till the next noon.

Doorvasa went with a host of followers and made the request as suggested by Duryodhana. He was coolly asked to finish his daily ablutions in the adjoining river and get ready for dinner. Meanwhile Droupadi thought of Sri Krishna who turned up at once. The

Lord pretended to be very hungry and asked her to produce some food. She hung down her head in shame. He asked her to produce the *patram*, where, above the neck, he discovered a particle of vegetable and rice. Putting it on his tongue, he offered it devoutly to Sri Hari.

The result was that Doorvasa and all his pupils felt as if they had eaten a most sumptuous repast. Their hunger was gone, and they had no appetite even for a morsel. Bheema had come in the meantime to invite them warmly to dinner, and the Rishi felt ashamed to decline. In the end, he and his followers managed to escape somehow. The moral of the story is obvious. A single particle of rice dedicated to Him can swell to the size of a mountain and bring on fruits and boons incalculable.

33) श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥

श्रेयान्	...	superior
द्रव्यमयात् यज्ञात्	...	than the sacrifice of wealth and material things
ज्ञानयज्ञः	...	the sacrifice of (leading directly to) knowledge
परंतप	...	O ! Parantapa, (the Victor)
सर्वं	...	all
कर्म	...	performances

अखिलं	...	in entirety (including every adjunctive rite)
पार्थ	...	O ! Arjuna
ज्ञान	...	in knowledge
परिसमाप्यते	...	are completed and fulfilled

“Superior to sacrifices of material things is the sacrifice (such as study) leading (directly) to knowledge, O!, Parantapa. All performances, in their entirety, are completed and fulfilled in knowledge.”

Or, अखिलं *even though trifling*, the meaning being “All performances, however trifling, bear their fruit in knowledge.”

In the second line, the use of the words सर्व and अखिल are usually synonymous, presents some difficulty. The two words used together convey a strong emphasis. अखिलं literally means ‘without exception’. In the rules of *karma*, we see laid down, auxiliary observances to make the chief performances more efficacious. Such adjunctive rites are, also, it is declared, fruitful in knowledge.

In Geeta Tatparya, an alternative rendering is shown. The word is not अखिलं = (entire) but ‘अखिलं’. The meaning is “that all actions, however trifling or small, bear fruit.” The verse says that everything ends in knowledge. How it ‘ends’ has been the subject of discussion.

The school of Sankaracharya say that when Realization of Unity takes place, all work and obligation to work ceases. Sri Madhwa holds that work and obligation continue even after God-vision, because while the antecedent work led to God-vision, the subsequent work swells his bliss in Moksha.

Madhusoodana suggests that the *end* referred to, consists in good actions dispelling all impediments such as mental faults and paving the way for Realization. In this rendering, सर्व कर्माखिलं refers to unselfish duties only. A commentator of the same school (Utkarsha Deepika) criticizes Madhusoodana, as improperly limiting and narrowing the expression सर्वकर्म to mean unselfish karma alone. But this criticism does not seem convincing. Although the verse has used comprehensive words सर्व and अखिल, it is the good deeds enjoined by the scriptures as leading to knowledge, that alone are contemplated and not every kind of activity. Hence Madhusoodana's interpretation does not seem to be objectionable.

Other writers of the same school, including Sankaracharya, interpret the predicate ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते to mean that the bliss of *karma* is merged in that of *gnana*. They rely on verse no. 46, chapter II, which speaks of the relative value of *karma* and *gnana* and their results, instancing the worth of a pond compared to the ocean. They quote the Sruti texts also which speak of the karmic fruits as infinitesimal compared with the bliss of the Seer. They refer to Chandogya,

IV, 1-6, where Muni Raikwa is praised as a sage who virtually reaps the fruits of every good karma performed by every person in the country sanctified by his dwelling.

The appropriateness of these quotations seems doubtful. In chapter II, verse 46, it is mercenary karma काम्य that is compared with *gnana* and brushed aside as relatively contemptible, and not निवृत्तकर्म. The same thing is pointed out in Srutis also, The text of Chandogya seems quite inappropriate. It speaks of the great sage *Rakwa* honouring and sanctifying the entire neighborhood by his residence in their midst. As neighbors did good *karma* because of the Muni's sanctified presence among them, the fruit and credit thereof belonged, it is said, to the sage. This notion has hardly any bearing on the lesson conveyed by the Geeta verse under notice. The latter deals with the point that the good *karma* of every person leads, to and is fulfilled in, his own knowledge.

In the first line, Neelakanta takes द्रव्ययज्ञ to comprehend the entire sphere of activity, including every variety of mental and physical work. By ज्ञानयज्ञ he takes 'absolute renunciation of work.' This is obviously incorrect. In the last verse (verse 32) the Lord pointed out that every यज्ञ including ज्ञानयज्ञ resolved itself into some kind of work, be it of *body*, *speech* or *mind*. That ज्ञानयज्ञ was one of the sacrifices adverted to is clear (see verse 28, second line).

Having said clearly that ज्ञानयज्ञ was also a कर्मज sacrifice, how could the Lord make a startling statement to the contrary that ज्ञानयज्ञ meant absolute cessation even of mental activity. It is moreover, difficult to see how द्रव्य could mean mental operations, as, ordinarily, it means wealth and the material things of the world. It is a favourite dogma of the Monistic teachers that ज्ञानयोग discards *karma* and is the end of all obligations. They think that ज्ञानयोग is the subject held up for adoption in the present verse.

Ramanujacharya seems to agree in the view that Gnanayoga does mean total renunciation of work. He thinks, however, that Gnanayoga is inferior to Karma yoga for various reasons. His conclusion is that Arjuna was called on to adhere fast to Karma yoga, and that the present verse extols *gnana which is a component part of karma yoga*. He points out that karma yoga consists of a material element (द्रव्य) and a knowledge-element (realizing the true nature of the Atman). It is the latter element of Karmayoga that is balanced against the material element, and declared superior.

We may point out that the notion of Gnanayoga excluding every obligation to do duties is fallacious. Equally wrong is the notion that Karmayoga is anywhere declared superior to Gnanayoga. The fact is that it is not Karmayoga alone that implies *karma*, *gnana* and *Bhakti*. Gnanayoga too implies all the three elements, and so does, Bhaktiyoga also. There may

be difference as to the preponderating element which, therefore, gives the appropriate name.

In the present verse, what is praised is ज्ञानयज्ञ any sacrifice that leads directly to knowledge. No specific *yoga* is meant to be held up as superior or inferior to any other. The goal of every *yoga* is God-vision, and it is that that is praised as the great object to be achieved.

34) तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

तत्	...	Therefore - or that
विद्धि	...	do know
प्रणिपातेन	...	by prostration
परिप्रश्नेन	...	by earnest inquiry
सेवया	...	by service
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति	...	will impart
ते	...	to you
ज्ञानं	...	knowledge
ज्ञानिनः	...	the wise; the knowers
तत्त्वदर्शिनः	...	and the seers of truth

“As gnana is the goal, know that that is got by means of prostrations, earnest inquiry, and service. The wise seers of Truth will then impart true knowledge to you.”

The word तत् is an indeclinable. It refers to the points taught in the last foregoing verse as reasons for the seeder seeking a Guru. It may also be taken as pronoun 'that', meaning 'whatever has to be known.'

The verse ends with the words ज्ञानिनः, तत्त्वदर्शिनः. These look synonymous. The distinction seems to lie in taking one of the words in the sense of 'Seers,' and the other to denote those who have only a sound book-learning of the Vedanta. The plural number in 'seers' and 'knowers' is honorific.

Although the Lord speaks of knowers and seers in the 3rd person, He does not mean to exclude Himself from the category of preceptors. The Lord means, "I have been teaching you and will complete the instruction by further lessons also. Other teachers also will do likewise." The use of the third person instead of the first is a delicate and refined form of expression covertly pointing to the speaker too.

The verse lays stress on an important point connected with the relation of preceptor and pupil. Under the old order of things fast disappearing in Modern India, the pupil sought the Teacher with prostration and service. However poor the teacher, he invariably gave the disciple a home, and imparted instructions without any monetary compensation. It was necessary that the teacher should be truly learned. It was necessary that the pupil should be seriously in earnest and crave ardently for knowledge. He should be prepared to render any service to the Teacher and be humble and obedient.

Of old, India solved the problem of education by providing Residential Universities in her own way. The Srutis declared that no man should barter his learning for a price. They censured the learned man who refused to teach a deserving disciple and said that such a man deserved to be hurled into the sea with a stone tied to his neck.

On the other hand, the scriptures forbade a promiscuous choice of so-called learners, and strongly deprecated the practice of throwing pearls before swine. The Geeta itself in chapter XVIII, verse 67, winds up by exhorting Arjuna thus, "Never is this to be taught by you to any one who lacks self-restraint, or devotion, nor to one who will not listen, or who speaks ill of Me." Among the qualifications of the pupil, be it noted again, are mentioned *humility, earnest seeking, and service*. No gold is referred to as an item of inducement. In Chandogya, IV, 1-6, Raikwa the sage is said to have rejected the most valuable presents of king Jana Sruta. He consented at last to teach the king, pleased with his earnestness, humility and loving service.

A commentator of the Advaitic school, Abhinava Guptacharya, takes the present Geeta verse in an esoteric sense only. He thinks that प्रणिपात, and परिश्रम denote the state of mind full of devotion and reasoning powers.

सेवा he takes to mean study and cramming. The seers who guide are the senses dominated by devotion

and reason and study. "They (the senses) lead the knower ever onward nearer and nearer the Truth."

This rendering is ingenious but not satisfactory. There is no reason to discard the plain lesson that the seeker ought to approach a Guru and, by devoted service, obtain true learning.

Scriptures and tradition have combined in India to invest the Guru with a halo of special sanctity. It is not learning alone that is of efficacy, but learning obtained through the proper channel and from a *proper* Guru. The Mahabharata contains many a story on the point. It is needless to discuss the matter in greater detail.

35) यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।
येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥

यत्	...	which
ज्ञात्वा	...	having known
न	...	not
पुनः	...	again
मोहं	...	misapprehension
एवं	...	thus
यास्यसि	...	come by
पाण्डव	...	O ! Pandava
येन	...	whereby

भूतानि	...	creatures
अशेषेण	...	without exception
द्रक्ष्यसि	...	you see
आत्मनि	...	in the Pervading Being
अथो	...	therefore
मयि	...	in Me

“Having known it, you will not fall again into misapprehension in this manner, O! Arjuna. All delusion being thus gone, by reason of true knowledge, you will see, therefore, all creatures in Me, the All-pervading.”

The Lord said that seers world impart true knowledge to the eagerly seeking pupil. The knowledge thus got is very valuable. Misapprehensions and doubts, such as Arjuna fell into and propounded in chapter I, will no longer be possible, upon true knowledge being obtained. The reason is that the pupil thus truly taught will see all creatures resting on, and upheld only by, Him.

The second line has been rendered variously by the three schools of philosophy.

The monistic school thinks that the seer sees all creatures in himself (his own self आत्मनि) and also in Sri Krishna. All duality having vanished from his vision, he sees but one self. Whatever he used to see before, creatures in any kingdom of nature, resolves itself before his eyes into the Atman. Sri Krishna is

also realized as identical with his own Atman and the entire cosmos.

The Visishtadwaita school follows a similar line of thought and substitutes 'equality' in the place of identity. Stripped of all material embodiments, all Jeevas are equal to one another in knowledge, bliss, and other respects, and equal likewise to God. In Mukti there is no difference or gradation. The Geeta verse says that the seer sees this equality among all creatures and God.

Sri Madhwa says that the seer sees all creatures in Sri Krishna who is immanent in all creatures. He realizes that God is present everywhere to uphold everything. Not a blade of grass can move without His active Presence. God is omnipresent in order to vivify all. Whoever knows this, has no delusion and no grief.

A few words of the second line have been interpreted in various ways in order to suit the tenets of each of these theories.

Sankaracharya and Ramanujacharya understand आत्मनि in the reflexive sense to mean – '*in himself*'! According to them, Arjuna, should, if a seer, see all creatures in himself. According to Sri Madhwa, it means the Pervading God. That the word has this meaning is well known to Vedantic Scholars and accepted in many a context by Sankaracharya and Ramanujacharya elsewhere. Without a deal of straining, it is not easy to explain how Arjuna or any seer can see the Universe in himself.

The word अथो means, ordinarily, 'and'. "The seer sees all creatures in himself and in Sri Krishna" is the interpretation of Sankaracharya and Ramanujacharya. According to Sri Madhwa, आत्मनि in the locative case is a descriptive adjective qualifying मयि, the two words conveying the sense that Sri Krishna is the All-pervading, Omnipresent Soul. In this view, अथो is not the conjunctive 'and'. It is the adverb "Therefore," and is to be read at the beginning of the sentence. "Misapprehensions being gone, Ergo, you see all in Me the Omnipresent," is the meaning conveyed. अथो meaning 'therefore' may also be understood as connecting आत्मनि with मयि. "You see all in the Omnipresent soul; and, as I am that omnipresent soul, in Me" – is the sense.

Scholars of Sanskrit, including those of Advaitic learning hesitate to say that आत्मनि is not an epithet of मयि. The gender, number and case agree, and the most natural construction is to take them as adjective and substantive respectively. Neelakanta, Madhusoodana, Venkatanatha and Abhinava, agree in this view and they add, by way of explanation, that the identity of Jeeva and Sri Krishna is meant to be conveyed by the said words taken together. Abhinava Gupta overthrows अथो as an expletive requisitioned only for the exigencies of prosody. Venkatanath takes अथो as the conjunction 'and' connecting भूतानि with अशेषेण. According to him, भूतानि

refers only to the narrow circle of Bheeshma, Drona and others, while अशेषेण covers the whole world, अयो the conjunction coupling the two.

Varieties of verbal constructions may be accepted, unless they conflict with the radical tenets of Vedanta. Among the above meanings, to take आत्मनि in the reflexive sense seems out of place and unacceptable.

The seer is called upon to see all creatures in the Atman, Sri Krishna. It follows naturally that all rest in Him and are upheld by Him. The locative case (सप्तमी) indicates dependence and difference. If identity or equality were meant, other expressions would have been chosen.

Monism holds that, at the dawn of Adwaitc *gnana*, the seer sees *nothing but Brahman*; he sees not any creatures or Sri Krishna or anything else, whatsoever. If this were the idea that the Geeta verse was meant to convey, suitable words would have been used to the effect that Arjuna the seer would *not* see any creatures, or Sri Krishna, but world gaze on, or be fixed in, *one* only, the Atman.

If the equality of all Jeevas in Mukti were contemplated in this verse, the Lord might well have said so. There are, unhappily, no words to mean equality. To see all in oneself does not necessarily mean all are equal. To read sense in what apparently conveys none at first, the commentator is obliged to add that this equality is the state of things obtaining not here but in Vykunta.

The dependence of Jeevas and the entire Universe on Sri Krishna the Omnipresent Upholder of all, is a well-known lesson inculcated in the Upanishads and the Shastras. Mantras 6 & 7 of Isavasya may well be remembered in this connection. Mantra 6.—

He who sees all beings in the Supreme Self (knowing that Brahman is the support of them all) and sees the Supreme Self in all beings (as the Ruler and Controller, from within, of them all) becomes fearless and is not anxious about saving himself.

Mantra 7. —

“That supreme Self in whom all beings exist has existed indeed within all beings (from eternity). How can he who knows this have delusion or sorrow? For he realizes the unity; the Supreme being in all, and all being in Him.”

36) अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।

सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥

अपिचेत्	...	Even if
असि	...	you be
पापेभ्यः	...	of sinners
सर्वेभ्यः	...	all
पापकृत्तमः	...	the worst sinner

सर्व	...	every sin
ज्ञानश्लेखेन	...	with the ship of knowledge
एव	...	alone
वृजिनं	...	sins
संतरिष्यसि	...	you will cross

“Even if you be the worst of all sinners, you will cross (the sea of) sins with the ship of knowledge alone.”

The efficacy and power of God-vision is set forth in this and two more verses. We are told that we may cross the ocean of sins in which we are immersed and tossed about, with God-vision as our ship. We get over all the evil effects of accumulated sins committed by us in the past, and reach the haven in safety.

Sankaracharya points out that the word *sin* (वृजिनं) stands for demerits as well as merits, because both are obstacles in the path of Mukti. This observation may be true in regard to good deeds which, being mercenary and selfish in purpose, act as golden fetters of impediment. But it does not apply to those acts and fruits of *Punya* which the seer may well wish to retain. They may go with him to Mukti and make his heavenly enjoyments doubly sweet. Under verse 50, chapter II of the Geeta, this point has been discussed, Sri Madhwa's view being that the seer discards all sins and such of the merits as are calculated to impede his path to Mukti and prevent the full evolution of bliss in his emancipated condition.

37) यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥

यथा	...	Just as
एधांसि	...	firewood
समिद्धः	...	blazing
अग्निः	...	fire
भस्मसात्	...	into ashes
कुरुते	...	converts
अर्जुन	...	O! Arjuna
ज्ञानाग्निः	...	the fire of knowledge, God- vision
सर्वकर्माणि	...	all deeds
भस्मसात्	...	into ashes
कुरुते	...	converts
तथा	...	likewise

“Just as a blazing fire converts firewood into ashes, O! Arjuna, so does God-vision convert all karma into ashes.”

The last verse compared sins or karma to an ocean and spoke of the seer crossing it with the aid of a ship. The voyager may reach the haven, but the ocean of sins may still endure, though left behind. The Lord, therefore, thinks of a happier illustration and compares the sins of the seers to logs of wood

burnt up by a blazing fire. He says that the sins are consumed away so as to give no more trouble.

It is a very ancient saying in the Srutis that we must work away our karma and there is no escape from it. The fruits of our past deeds must be enjoyed or suffered by us in the endless eternity of time.

On the other hand, it is stated in the Vedas and Brahmasootras that the seer is released, on attaining God-vision, from the effects of past and future karma.

Hence, the rule as to the peremptory domination of karma must be limited to non-seers and to what is known as प्रारब्धकर्म (which will be explained below).

All the commentators agree that God-vision exempts the seer from all future karma. It also kills for him all the past, except प्रारब्ध. That is to say, whatever of the past karma has already commenced to bear fruit must be worked through, in spite of the God-vision that the seer has come to be blessed with.

The verse says that knowledge kills karma. The destruction referred to, is, according to Sankaracharya, achieved in the following manner. Knowledge is hostile to, and kills, ignorance; All karma is the product of Maya or root-ignorance. If Monistic Realization kills 'Root-ignorance,' its off-shoots vanish of their own accord. Knowledge cannot kill karma directly as a cat does the mouse. It acts only indirectly by tackling the seed or root-cause.

The proposition that God-vision cannot attack and dispel karma directly is disputed by Sri Madhwa. Why should Divine Knowledge be inefficient to destroy sin? They say that the sight of Rameswara Setu kills sin. Why should this be rejected as false? The question is asked how a mental state like a thought, idea, or knowledge, can kill anything but its antithesis, *viz.*, ignorance. The answer is that scriptures teach us the hostility of God-vision and sin. It is a religious tenet which, if we believe in the Shastras, we have to accept, as we do so many other tenets such as the existence of God and of sin.

With regard to the doctrine that 'God - vision' does not destroy *प्रारब्धकर्म*, there is abundant authority in the Vedas and Brahma Sootras for it, and all the three schools are agreed on the point.

It has to be noted that the commentators of the Sankara-school explain this doctrine as to *प्रारब्ध* in two different ways. Some say that, though Realization of Unity kills the root-ignorance (*माया* or *अविद्या*) *out and out*, still the effect of such karma as has been already set in motion continues for a time, just as a wheel rotating fast continues to rotate for a while even after the motive power has been stopped at the source.

Others hold that *gnana* destroys only that part of Avidya which is the cause of Sanchita-karma and future karma, and does not, in fact, kill the fraction thereof which is the root of *प्रारब्ध*. No reason is given

why gnana should deal with Avidya in this partial way and split up the indivisible Avidya into divisions. After all, the whole theory rests on the Shastras. If we believe and accept them, the point is directly met by the view that God-vision is a transcendental agency that is willed by God to destroy all karma except Prarabdha. As to the latter, it is His law that Prarabdhas should be reduced and wiped away by enjoyment or suffering as the case may be. In His Grace, He may allow a reduction or remission, but the general rule is that even the seer must work them out.

38) न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥

न	...	not
हि	...	indeed
ज्ञानेन	...	to God-vision
सदृशं	...	equal
पवित्रं	...	anything purifying
इह	...	in the world
विद्यते	...	there is
तत्	...	that
स्वयं	...	himself
योगसंसिद्धं	...	the adept in yoga
कालेन	...	after a very long time

आत्मनि	...	in his mind;—or in respect
		to God
विन्दति	...	gets

“Not indeed is there anything as purifying as God-vision here below. The adept himself gets it (knowledge) in his mind (or in respect to God) after a long time.”

Good deeds may be efficient to destroy sin. But there is no comparison between God-vision and good deeds in respect to their power to dispel sins.

How is God-vision obtained and when? The Lord says ‘after a very long time.’ Innumerable births have to be undergone and almost endless experience obtained, before we reach the proper stage of mental purity. God does not flash before the mental eye until and unless our mind is quite clear and pure. It will be a long, – a very long time, indeed. (कालेनबहुना).

The reflexive स्वयं denotes that no amount of crammed instruction or knowledge is of use. The purity of mind is an organic growth. It should be self-evolved, not super-imposed.

Commentators seize hold of “योगसंसिद्धः” and take योग in various senses. Sankaracharya takes it to mean ‘karmayoga’ as well as meditative trance. Ramanajucharya’s construes it as Karmayoga alone, and Venkatanatha, though a Monist, agrees with

Ramanajucharya. It stands to reason that a karmayogin should, after a prolonged practice of *karma* in the right spirit, get a pure mind fit for preliminary knowledge and ultimate God-vision.

Sankarananda will not tolerate *karmayoga* as being contemplated in this context. He thinks that the verse refers only to the ascetic or Sanyasin, and that the yoga here meant is only Gnanayoga. He goes on to point out that the adept spoken of is the person who has renounced, and lost all touch with, the world of external experiences.

It is difficult to see why yoga should not be a generic term denoting the sum of practices and performances gone through by devotees, be they karmayogins, Gnanayogins or Bhaktiyogins. Jeevas fall under these 3 different heads according to their desert, and each yogin, whatever his class and designation, has to go through Yoga by which is understood "the means (उपाय) of gnana." Thus it is hardly necessary to confine the word "yoga" of the Geeta verse to mean any particular yoga to the exclusion of the rest.

आत्मनि विन्दति are the last words of the verse. आत्मा may mean *the mind*. God-vision being a mental flash, it is quite right to speak of the vision being mental in composition.

आत्मनि may also be a reference to God as the object of the knowledge in question. Both the senses have the approval of some commentator or other.

39) श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं मत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

श्रद्धावान्	...	He who has faith
लभते	...	gets
ज्ञानं	...	God-vision; knowledge
मत्परः	...	devoted to Me
संयतेन्द्रियः	...	of senses controlled
ज्ञानं	...	God-vision; knowledge
लब्ध्वा	...	having got
परां	...	Supreme
शान्तिं	...	peace of emancipation
अचिरेण	...	soon
अधिगच्छति	...	he attains

“He who has faith, gets the knowledge, being devoted to Me and having the senses under control. Having got the knowledge, he soon attains the Supreme peace of Salvation.”

The Lord here tells us the equipments of the true seeker. We were told before, that the seeker should select a knowing Gurn and serve him. No amount of outward behavior and conduct will avail, if the heart is void of true faith and the mind run riot among pleasures. The importance of faith in this connection can hardly be overrated. It implies an amount of mental

receptivity. The atheist or the agnostic who steels his mind against Revealed religions seldom possesses the proper frame of mind which could benefit by theological lessons or reasonings.

Starting with faith, the seeker should set limits to the roaming senses and the mind. Thus equipped, he should develop a strong devotion to God. Continuing steadily with these aids, he gets at the goal of God-vision. Beyond this stage, there is hardly any further impediment to Mukti. It is in wiping Prarabdha out of the way that some delay, if any, may occur.

Except in Vivriti, the reading in other editions of the Bhagavad Geeta is तत्परः instead of मत्परः. तत्परः is construed to mean 'with steady aim at the goal.' मत्पर reads more sense, because it directs attention to the necessity of worship and devotion. No equipment is complete which leaves God and His worship out of account.

The verse ends by saying, he *soon* attains Mukti. The word अचिरेण 'soon' has been held by the school of Advaitic commentators to mean that, between the Realization of Unity and Emancipation, there is no interval at all, just as there is none between the introduction of light and disappearance of darkness. In comments under verse 37 (यथैषांसि), these very writers expatiated on प्रारब्ध as delaying the salvation of the seer till that is worked out. It may chance that that is worked out in a single Janma or it may require

more births. But anyhow, work it away he must, and there is no escape. As if completely forgetting the doctrine relating to प्रारब्ध, these writers lay down in the present verse, on the analogy of the physical lamp and physical darkness, that in the identical moment of gnana, Moksha follows, without more.

Desikacharya rightly draws attention to the delay that may be caused by Prarabdha, and says that “अचिरेण” “soon” does not exclude this inevitable delay. He, however, adds that ‘अचिरेण’ shows that the seer has not to encounter delay by having to get into *gnanayoga* or *to take any further birth*. He thinks that the seer (who has obtained Realization through Karma yoga) must, however, get *through Bhaktiyoga* and also *work out Prarabdha*.

With regard to these observations, the first error is that the seer will, on no account, need to take any future births. The notion seems to be that he will be able to wipe out all प्रारब्ध, whatever its extent or nature, within the span of *one* mortal life, or rather in the interval, short or long, between God-vision and his death. The second error lies in thinking that a *Karmayogi* seer has necessarily to pass through Bhaktiyoga before reaching salvation, but, not through Gnanayoga. But, as a matter of fact, Karma yoga implies a certain proportion of *gnana* and *Bhakti*, though *karma* is the preponderating factor. Hence no karmayogin need go through Gnanayoga or Bhaktiyoga as such. Each yoga is full and complete

in itself, and the seer who has seen God through any of the three yogas has not to pass through any other of the yogas at all, but reaches the goal after working out his प्रारब्ध alone in that birth or more births as the case may be.

40. अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥

अज्ञः	...	the ignorant
च	...	and
अश्रद्धधानः	...	the unbeliever
च	...	and
संशयात्मा	...	the agnostic
विनश्यति	...	go to ruin
न	...	not
अयं	...	this
लोकः	...	world
अस्ति	...	there is
न	...	not
परः	...	the one beyond
न	...	not
सुखं	...	happiness
संशयात्मनः	...	to the agnostic

“And the ignorant person, the unbeliever and the agnostic, are ruined. There is not this world nor the one beyond, nor happiness, to the agnostic.”

This verse censures the ignorant (अज्ञ). The term includes one who has false notions and wrong knowledge. The verse censures also the unbeliever, the one who has no faith. It condemns strongly the ever-doubting agnostic. The second line specially speaks of him as one who reaps not the fruits either of this world or of the next, and knows no happiness whatsoever.

To remain plunged in ignorance is far from desirable. Man is blessed with reason and intelligence. To let it rust away, and to spend the short span of existence we call life, steeped in ignorance, is deplorable. Equally so is the state of existence in which the notions gathered and stored are all wrong in the domain of ethics or religion.

Then again, the unbeliever who will not accept anything held sacred, and the atheist who believes in no God, is surely on the road to self-destruction.

We see many an agnostic among the leaders of men. In society, he is a cynic. In ethics, he is a misanthrope with no belief in Dharma or morality. He scoffs at righteousness and takes it for granted that honesty and chastity are mere questions of price and opportunity. In religion, he doubts whether a soul exists apart from the body, whether any life after death is true or possible, and whether God exists in any

sense. The man who always hesitates and doubts is truly miserable.

If one does not trust one's friends and relations, he cannot get on. If one is ever suspicious even of one's wife, happiness is for him out of the question. A certain amount of trust is necessary for pushfulness, pluck and enterprise. Without these, wealth and prosperity are impossible to acquire. The cynic can never get on in society. With distrust cast over every surrounding by a mind warped by suspicion, he sees and judges the world amiss and is the miserable victim of hallucinations and fears. The Lord has, therefore, put it very well that to the 'doubter' there is not this world or the next, nor happiness in any sense.

41) योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ॥

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ...	(Him) who has renounced desire of fruits by yoga
ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयं ...	(Him) whose doubts have been cloven asunder by gnana
आत्मवन्तं ...	(Him) who is devoted to God
न ...	not
कर्माणि ...	actions
निबध्नन्ति ...	do bind
धनंजय ...	O ! Arjuna

“Actions do not bind one who has renounced fruit by yoga, whose doubts have been cloven asunder by gnana and who is devoted to God.”

Arjuna is told here that actions do not bind the gnani-worker. It is possible that the Lord does not exclude accumulated *Karma* or sins of the past from view. But that doctrine of karmic destruction has been specifically noticed in verses 36 and 37. At present, the chapter is about to close with the exhortation that Arjuna should take to Yoga and stand up (आतिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत). It is therefore particularly in point to tell him that actions do not bind the doer, if done in the proper spirit, and that his military engagement will not fetter his spiritual advancement.

The word आत्मवन्तं has been variously construed. Atman is, in all these places, used to denote God. He who has God (आत्मवान्) is one who ever cherishes a worshipful devotion to Him. This is the interpretation in Vivriti. Sankarananda has no objection to Atman meaning “Brahman,” and he explains the sense to be ‘one who sees nothing but Brahman in the entire Universe.’ This is Adwaita.

Sankaracharya and Ramanujacharya render आत्मा to mean ‘the mind’. So that, according to the former and his followers, the man of true mental peace is the subject of reference. According to Ramanujacharya, one whose mind has firmly grasped the lessons inculcated so far, is the person referred to.

It is curious why Ramanujacharya is so particular to take Atman here and elsewhere in the sense of mind rather than of God. He upholds the supremacy of God and dualism, too, in a sense. He is a great apostle of devotion. Hence, he has no reason to fight shy of expressions and passages that ordinarily inculcate devotion.

In the first line, these are two expressions descriptive of the Yogin and the Gnanin. It is obvious that when *gnana* has been got, all doubts have vanished.

But what is 'Yoga' in the first compound word of the verse, and what is the renunciation (संन्यास) contemplated?

Sankaracharya and most of his followers eagerly explain 'yoga' to mean the Advaitic Realization. If so, it follows that renunciation consists *in an utter and wholesale repudiation of action*. The difficulty is, if yoga thus means *gnana*, why the Lord does not use the word *gnana* itself here, instead of *yoga*. The verse would have read very well thus (ज्ञानसंन्यस्तकर्माणि ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम्).

Madhusoodana does not care to follow his brethren, and his interpretation (given alternatively) is that yoga is Karmayoga taught in ver. 48, chapter II; — 'Balance of mind evenly between success and failure.' In other words, the renunciation contemplated is of desire and fruits. He also says that dedication

of fruit unto God is what is meant by *yoga* here. What Madhusoodana offers as an alternative interpretation, Venkatanath presses as the only right one.

Utkarsha Deepika criticizes Madhusoodana and thinks that a total renunciation of work is the lesson conveyed. As Desikar points out, how can the Lord advocate such a lesson consistently with the object, purport and drift of the thesis, that Arjuna should take to *yoga* and fight?

42) तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥

तस्मात्	...	Therefore
अज्ञानसंभूतं	...	born of ignorance
हृत्स्थं	...	dwelling in the heart
ज्ञानासिना	...	with the sword of knowledge
आत्मनः	...	relating to God
छित्त्वा	...	cutting asunder
एनं	...	this
संशयं	...	doubt
योगं	...	yoga
आतिष्ठ	...	adopt
उत्तिष्ठ	...	stand up
भारत	...	O! Arjuna

“Therefore, having cut asunder this doubt born of ignorance and dwelling in the heart, with the sword of knowledge relating to God, do you adopt *yoga* and stand up, O! Bharata.”

“Therefore” sums up all the reasons urged as to the obligatoriness of karma. The good results of *karma* and the disastrous consequences of non-doing were set forth at some length. Hence, Arjuna is exhorted at the end to adopt *karmayoga* with reference to the *pros* and *cons* discussed.

It is also likely that reference is particularly intended to the point that *karma* is no fetter to an aspirant, if the fruit thereof is not desired and if it is simply performed as a duty and to please God.

Every doubt consists to two sides or aspects. Seeing a pillar, if a man doubts, for want of sufficient light, whether it be a man or a post, he sees some features common to both these objects and fails to observe what differentiates them. A knowledge of some common features with ignorance of particularities is the parent of every doubt. Arjuna's doubts as set out in chapter I also arose out of a vague grasp of some general truths mixed with ignorance of special points and features. Hence, Sri Krishna calls “ignorance” the parent of ‘doubt.’

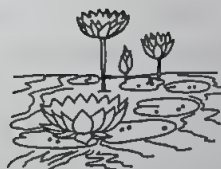
Another epithet applied to ‘doubt is हृत्स्थं *dwelling in the heart*. Heart means the mind. As doubt dwells in the mind, and knowledge also is mental, it stands to reason that the latter should kill

the former. Doubt and knowledge rest on a common field and fight each other, the result being the victory of the latter.

Moreover, the object of knowledge and of doubt is the same. It is God that is not truly known. Doubt relates to God and it is knowledge, also relating to God, that can kill that particular doubt. Hence आत्मनः should be read with ज्ञान (in ज्ञानासिना) and with संशय in the 2nd line, so as to bring out the meaning that 'knowledge' is competent to kill 'doubt,' as both relate to the same object-matter.

The Lord exhorts Arjuna to adopt yoga. He calls on the warrior to gird up his loins to fight. This leaves no room for doubt as to what is the yoga urged for adoption. It is certainly *karmayoga*.

End of Chapter IV



SUMMARY.

PART 1.

This chapter deals principally with God and Gnana. It is not inaptly called Gnanayoga.

At the commencement of every *Kalpa*, God instructs the progenitors of the human race. Sri Krishna says he gave this Yoga Teaching to Vivaswan, the father of Manu, Sraddha Deva. From him, it descended in a long line. Kings and Rishis possessed this learning and handed it down. Long ages that have gone by, dimmed its brightness and purity. Other causes also joined, tending to the same result, such as the curse of Gautama. It became virtually extinct. Now that an occasion presented itself, it was re-taught to Arjuna and the world.

Arjuna wished to know how Sri Krishna taught the First-born of men. He was anxious to be enlightened on the subject of God's doings in His Avatars.

The reply sets forth briefly that God takes many an Avatar and does many a marvel. No doubt, man too incarnates millions of times. But God's Avatars are not to be likened to those of man. God knows all about His Avatars and always. But man, as a rule, has no recollection of his past. Even the Yogin of subtle vision remembers only a fraction of his previous birth or births. Nor does he recollect all the incidents connected therewith. But God knows all His Avatars past, present and future. He knows not only of Himself but of everyone else and everything else. He knows

every incident of the universe, not as faded or unfaded Memory, but as First-hand Perception.

It is a great mystery how God takes Form as an incarnation. He is birthless, for He assumes not a material Body, as the incarnating man does. He is not compelled by any force beyond control, such as the bondage-producing Karma in the case of man, to take a birth. He is the Lord Supreme and is subject to no change whatever. He produces Himself in manifested Forms, and took and behaves like a human Being. Human parents and the womb of a mother are but accessories of a 'Make-believe' sport that He indulges in. The Devi, Durga, the Goddess of Tamoguna, deludes men into the belief that God is but a person of flesh and blood. In truth, however, the Divine Avatar is, in no sense, different from His very essence. It is absolutely *Non-material* in substance. It is endowed with all the attributes of God. It is immortal, never born and never dying.

God incarnates whenever Dharma languishes on the globe. When wickedness raises its head, God comes down to tread upon it. To protect good men and destroy evil-doers and thus establish righteousness, is the great object of Avatars.

Every true believer should well recognise the importance of Avatars and understand how and why the Non-manifest God Supreme, chooses to become Manifest.

The source of every boon and blessing is God. If worshippers address other Deities for boons, God

interferes to comply with their prayers. If they happen to think of Sri Narayana at least at the end, He sends down desired blessings quickly.

Sri Krishna says that it is He that has distributed men into castes on the footing of their deserts. Taking into account the character and conduct of various classes of men, God allots to each his place in society, and his function. He Himself brings no bias or prejudice into play, and does not incur the least stain by what He creates and governs.

Remembering that castes and their functions are of Divine Origin and are strictly based on men's deserts, and remembering too that God is the true Inspirer and Doer of all-work, the Karmayogin places himself at the disposal of God as His instrument.

In this connection, Arjuna is told with great vehemence that 'work,' 'no-work' and 'mis-work' are not to be understood as laymen may literally take the said words. Mere physical exertion is not work. Mere idleness is not 'no-work.' So also mis-work is not what ignorant people consider to be wrong. 'Work' has to be understood in a religious sense. What is dedicated to God in the fullness of belief that God is the great Dispenser, is 'work'. Although he may be the busiest of the busy, the Yogin attending to every duty of life is still a person of 'no-work,' *i.e., renunciation*, because all his doings are actuated by this religious spirit. The more a person realizes his own dependence on God and sees the Divine Hand at work everywhere, the higher his place as a true renouncer. Renuncia-

tion is thus an abandonment of desire, egotism and fruits, – rather than a course of physical non-doing. Such a person is the true ascetic, although he has not assumed the Order. He is ever contented and pleased. He is busy, but is really a non-doer. His *body* is alone engaged in work, the mind remaining pure. He is satisfied with what is got unsought, the influence of ‘opposites’ being virtually non-existent. His thoughts are bent on God and he undertakes work for the pleasure of God.

From verse 24 to 32, the Lord enumerates a dozen or more sacrifices among the engagements of the Yogin. The true meaning of ‘*sacrifice*’ is hereby illustrated. It is pointed out that the underlying feature common to all sacrifices is dedication to Brahman. The oblation, the clarified butter, the ladle, and every component of the sacrifice, is to be regarded as Brahman in the sense that

He is the true doer and enjoyer. To dislodge the prevailing notion of *Yagnas* that they are necessarily connected with ‘Fires’ and ‘Pourings’, Sri Krishna sets out a few Yagnas. He says some offer *Pooja*, and others pour oblations into the Fire. Some pour senses into the Fires of restraint; others allow themselves a moderation of sense-enjoyments. Some restrain organs of action and breaths, by checking the centres of volition, while others believe in gifts of charity; some regard penance as Yagna; others believe in the control and practice of Kumbhaka Breath. Some worship God by methods of Ashtanga-*-yoga*, while others are yogins whose chief method is abstemiousness of food. Many

are the Yagnas resorted to by Yogins, and all of them are on the right path towards Brahman. They are wise, so long as they act in the right spirit and regard their thoughts, words and deeds, as so many acts of worship.

Let no one fancy that *some* of these alone are *acts*, and imagine that sacrifices such as penance, study, and contemplation, are not *acts*. All the enumerated Yagnas and others of the kind that are conceivable on the same line of thought are but *acts* external or internal. Arjuna had no reason therefore to abandon his military duties on the wrong supposition that he might take to some kind of retired life and avoid action.

Of these various *acts* comprising Yagnas, purely external doings, such as gifts of wealth, are not so great as internal acts such as study and knowledge. For, knowledge and God-vision is the end of all sacrifice.

True knowledge is available to the seeker only if he seeks a proper preceptor with eagerness and humility, renders him service, and seeks learning in a spirit of inquiry.

The preceptor will then impart true learning. The result will be the conviction that God is all in all. He then comes to realize the truth that God is the inner Ruler of his life, and that that God is *Sri Krishna*.

God-vision once established affords a guarantee of the goal. Sins of the past are burnt up and sins of the future are avoided.

What about the ever-doubting mind full of distrust? Such a mind is a curse. The person that hesitates to accept any truth, expecting what he regards as mathematical demonstrations, is doomed. One who acts with faith and courage reaps rewards here and hereafter. One whose prevailing fault is hesitancy is past hopes of redemption.

In these circumstances, Arjuna is called upon to adopt Karmayoga and reach the goal of Gnana.

PART II, SECTION (a)

THE SCHOOL OF ADWAITA.

In the school of Sankaracharya, there seems to be strong divergence of opinion regarding the Avia-trix Forms of God. Sankaracharya holds that the Bodies of Sri Krishna, Rama and other Avatars, are composed of extremely subtle and fine *Material* stuff that undergoes birth and death. Madhusoodana and Neelakanta think that Avataric Forms are *non-spiritual* in composition and are unborn and undying. This is also Sri Madhwa's view. In this connection, Ramanujacharya's view may also be adverted to, in a word. He thinks that Avataric Forms take birth and death but are non-material in composition.

Throughout the chapter, "Unreality" is the note sounded by all the annotators of the Sankara school. The two main subjects dealt with in the chapter are (1) Avatars and (2) Action. Both are said to be unreal. In the face of this opinion that Avataric Forms are but unreal apparitions, the controversy as to their composition, *viz.*, whether they are material and perishable, or non-material and eternal, is hardly of value.

They say that the soul is no Doer. It is as true of man as of God. Venkatanath thinks that under verse 13, Sri Krishna has declared this most emphatically. He thinks that this particular verse has sounded *the trumpet of glory* for the Monist, because it says that God is अकर्ता as well as कर्ता. It is supposed to mean that *Doership* is false and *non-doership* is alone true.

They say that the object in enumerating twelve or more sacrifices is to impress on the Yogin the desirability of discarding them all as false. The conclusion, according to Sankaracharya, is that Arjuna is called upon to adopt renunciation and Gnanayog (*vide* verses 18 and 41).

It is interesting to note that, before the time of Sankaracharya, there was a Vrittikara commentator whose interpretations ran on lines of Dwaitic thought. Sankaracharya refers to this school under verses 18 and 24. According to Vrittikara, *Karma* is A karma if it is done in a purely religious spirit because it is then not associated with sin (verse 18). Under verse 24 which speaks of Brahman being Yagna and all its components, Vrittikara says it means that God is in them all, as He is believed to be in images, Sankaracharya, of course, attacks Vrittikara very strongly.

In this chapter also, Madhusoodana creates some occasions to censure Arjuna for his ignorance. Taking advantage of the word परन्तप, in verse 5, Madhusoodana says that Arjuna was creating for himself imaginary enemies in the shape of *Dualistic notions and fighting*

them, so that he was making it really hot for Sri Krishna to dislodge these unworthy notions from his mind. This is only a sample.

But for the author of Sankara Bhashyotkarsha Deepika one might run away with the idea that the commentators of the Adwaita school have interpreted the Geeta on a uniform basis in perfect accord with one another. But the said writer attacks Madhusoodana, Neelankanta and Sreedhara, very largely, and points out their heresy in venturing to dissent from Sankaracharya every now and then. For instances, the reader may see under verses 5, 18 and 28.

It is a point worthy of note that Sridhara follows Sri Madhwa's views in many places. For instance, under verse 10, Sridhara has resisted the temptation of construing मन्मय and मद्भाव in an Advaitic sense, and preferred to construe them in a devotional spirit. In respect to the expression अकर्ता of verse 13 which is the trumpet-note of victory for the Monist as Venkatanatha puts it, Sridhara concurs with Sri Madhwa and Ramanujacharya that that word means "an extraordinary doer whose work is unlike that of man and everyone else" Under verse 14, where Sri Krishna plainly refers to himself, saying, "Actions do not bind Me," Sridhara agrees with Sri Madhwa in the view that the antecedent of "Me" is the Lord, and not the *human thinker* as others would have it. This is the place where Venkatanath censures Sri Madhwa as ruining himself and the Bhagavad Geeta, too, by unsound interpretations.

But Sridhara, an acknowledged leader of Adwaita, prefers here to adopt Sri Madhwa's view rather than that of his own brethren. In verse 18, Sridhara speaks with devotion about "Dedicating actions to God." "Karma is no karma if dedicated to God," is the lesson he lays stress on; while all the rest of the school think that verse 18 lays down the unreality of karma. In fact, Sridhara's interpretation resembles that of Vrittikara whom Sankaracharya himself has criticised.

As to verses 19,21,22, and 23 which Sankaracharya, Madhusoodana and Neelakanta, have interpreted in various ways as applicable to the sage, the seeker, the Sanyasin, the house-holder, and so on, Sridhara differs from all his brethren and construes them, like Sri Madhwa, to be of common application, no particular sage, seeker or Asrama, being specifically contemplated. Verse No. 25 has been interpreted on lines of Dwaita, although Sankarananda is warm in deducing Monism from the second line in particular of that verse. It may be seen that Sankarananda expects the seer to offer himself and *Vishnu also* as a sacrifice into the unconditioned. Brahman by realizing the 'Oneness' of all.

PART II (b)

RAMANUJACHARYA

In the matter of Avatars, this Teacher holds the view, as already noticed, that the Incarnate Forms of God are Non-Material, though they undergo *Birth and Death*. Sri Madhwa thinks, on the other hand,

that God only manifests Himself, and is, in no sense, born or will die.

Under verses 8 and 9, we see the opinion of Ramanujacharya and Desikar about Vedavyasa. They do not accept Vyasa to be an Avatar of Sri Vishnu. They take him to be a great Rishi only, who was deputed by God for the establishment of Dharma. Under verse 9, the note appears that Vyasa had Prarabdha to work out, but that he did so in a single birth.

In this school, belief in Archavatara forms an important article of faith (see verse No. 11). They say that idols worshipped in temples such as Srirangam, are Avatars of God. They do not grant that the images are metallic, but believe that they are themselves Forms of God composed of nonmaterial stuff. God takes such Forms for the benefit of Bhaktas, and, it is added, *He cannot help doing so*, because this kind of boon cannot be conferred by Him by deputing an agent like Vyasa or anyone else for the purpose.

The chief plank of Visishtadwaita is that God is *the efficient as well as the material cause* of the world. This tenet is brought in under verses 14 and 24.

On the important section of this chapter, namely, verses 16 to 23, which deal with "work, no-work and miswork" कर्म, अकर्म and विकर्म, Ramanujacharya's line of thought is different from that of Sri Madhwa as well as Sankaracharya. Whereas Sri Madhwa thinks that they lay stress on the value of '*Dedication unto God*,' because God is the true Doer, and whereas Sankaracharya thinks that *Doership* is false whether

it relates to man or God, Ramanujacharya thinks that Karma and Akarma denote only '*work and knowledge*'. According to him, Karma yoga consists of two ingredients, *self-knowledge* (आत्मज्ञान) and work (कर्म).

These two combine in harmony and are not hostile, With reference to their concord, Karma is said to be Gnana and Gnana is said to be Karma. The point taught is, therefore, that the Yogin should acquire Gnana and do Karma. Following this line of argument, Ramanujacharya interprets the final section of the chapter, *viz.*, verses 33 onwards, to be a descriptive eulogy of the Gnana-element of Karma yoga. In his opinion, Karma yoga is superior to Gnanayoga, but the Gnana-element of Karma yoga is superior to the karma-element thereof.

Before closing, an important difference between Sri Madhwa and Ramanujacharya may be drawn attention to . The first section glorifies God by speaking of His Avatars and His Work. Next the dependence of Man on God is adverted to, and the true Doership of God is affirmed. Next, sacrifices are enumerated and the religious efficacy thereof emphasized to the effect that Dedication alone marks its greatness. Finally God-vision is again spoken of as the great end. Hence Arjuna is exhorted to do work, and surrender himself into the hands of God. Ramanujacharya's interpretation does not bring out God into *such* prominence. Unlike Sri Madhwa, he often construes आत्मा to mean the *self*, rather than God.

॥ श्रीः ॥

CHAPTER V

पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ।

अर्जुन उवाच—

- 1) संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥

अर्जुन	... Arjuna
उवाच	... said
संन्यासं	... renunciation (of desire and its kindred)
कर्मणां	... of actions
कृष्ण	... O! Krishna

पुनः	... again
योगं	... due performance (with dedication to God)
च	... and
शंससि	... you advise
यत्	... which
श्रेयः	... is better
एतयोः	... of these two
एकं	... one
तत्	... that
मे	... to me
ब्रूहि	... say
सुनिश्चितं	... definitely

I. "O ! Krishna, you advise renunciation (of desire and its kindred), and also due performance of actions. Tell me definitely, which one is the better of the two."

II. Alternative meaning

संन्यासं - Ascetic order

योगं - the householder's life.

"You advise the life of asceticism and of the householder. Tell me which one is the better of the two."

The second of the two meanings above given is based on the Geeta Tatparya. Arjuna bases his question on verse 41, chapter IV, where he takes संन्यस्त to

mean the ascetic order, and one verse 42, chapter IV, where he takes 'yoga' at the end of the verse to mean the householder's life. The Lord, of course, did not use these words in any technical sense, and he proceeds to say, in the course of his reply, that true *Sanyasa* is only a renunciation of desires, and this is inferior to a devotional performance of actions. Without understanding *संन्यास* and *योग* in any technical sense, it is necessary to find out what is the doubt and the query of Arjuna, and what is the reply. There is, of course, difference of opinion in the matter.

Ramanujacharya thinks that Arjuna was perplexed by the alternative encomiums bestowed on *Karmayoga* and *gnanayoga*, and that he wants to choose one of them for easy adoption. According to this author, the Lord's reply is to the effect that both are good, and as between the two, however, *Karmayoga* is better. This Acharya indulges in a frequent eulogy of *karmayoga* and points out that it is superior to *gnanayoga* for several reasons.

One is that *Gnanayoga* is adapted only to persons of *mental purity*, while *Karmayoga* is available to all. Another is that *karmayoga* is easy, while the other is rigorous and onerous in practice. A third reason is that the former has little or no penalties for lapses, while the other is rather severe and exacting on its votaries. A fourth is that whereas the former is an exhaustive method with a happy blend of *gnana* and *Karma*, *Gnanayoga* is not self-contained and exhaustive, but depends to some extent on *Karmayoga* as a helpful complement.

It must be observed that these reasons for setting Karmayoga above Gnanayoga are unsound. Karmayoga, Gnanayoga and Bhaktiyoga, are separately adapted to different classes of qualified persons. Each is complete in itself. and each carries and implies a due measure and proportion of all the three viz., *karma gnana* and *bhakti*. For a full discussion of this, see chapter III, verses 1, 2, and 3.

Then again, according to Ramanujacharya, exactly the same question was addressed by Arjuna to the Lord in verse No. 1 of chapter III and the Lord gave exactly this very reply in verse No.8 of chapter III, stating that Karmayoga was superior to Gnanayoga. Unless Arjuna was very dull and forgetful, we fail to see why he should ask the same question once more.

Sankaracharya and his followers make out that Arjuna wishes to choose between renunciation of actions and performance of actions, as both have been praised by Sri Krishna. Renunciation of two kinds. (1) What is resorted to by seers who have actually realized Unity: and (2) what is adopted by individuals who are *विरक्त*s but who are no seers and are still on the wrong side of realization. Karmayoga is out of the question to seers of Realized Unity, for these have crossed the boundary of actions.

Thus Sanyasa and Karmayoga being available to non-seers, Arjuna taking it for granted that he is a non-seer, wishes to choose between the two and asks about their relative value. He does not see that even among 'non-seers', only those whose minds are puri-

fied by dispassion (विरक्ति) &c., are fit for Sanyasa, and, out of this ignorance, arises his doubt. The Lord's reply is, according to this school, that Sanyasa and Karmayoga are both good, according to the mental purity or otherwise of the votary, and that, to Arjuna, Karmayoga was the better of the two.

Sankaracharya's note on this verse is long, and tries to discuss the point that a seer of Realized Unity is beyond any action or obligation. The author quotes many a verse in chapters II, III & IV, and labours hard to establish a proposition that is really unsound. Every one of the quoted verses is found, on examination, to deal not with renunciation of actions but of desires. In fact, everyone, be he a seer or no seer, is bound to work and do duties, except one who, being a seer, happens to be plunged in a trance of Divine Meditation.

Sri Madhwa's rendering is to the following effect:- Karmayoga taught in the preceding chapters consists of two important factors : (1) renunciation of desires (and its kindred such as anger etc.) and (2) performance of action with Divine dedication. Arjuna knows and remembers fully that these two points were well set forth before, and that nowhere did Sri Krishna teach inconsistencies such as "do work" and "don't work". Thus knowing and remembering, he wishes to know further, the relative value of the two factors that make up Karmayoga. He faintly suggests that if the first element, viz., renunciation of desire etc., be the more important element of the two, his military engagement would be wrong, for a battle without a trace of passion would be rare and anomalous.

The Lord replies, insisting on both the elements as important, and proceeds to point out, however, that the second element is of greater value than the first. The reason for this is obvious, as the second element implies a trust in God and indicates the value of Divine worship. Nothing is equal to this in efficacy, devotion and dedicatin to God being pre-eminently superior to anything else conceivable among spiritual equipments. In various places, (See chapter II, verse 61, chapter III, verses 30 and 43, chapter IV, verses 9, 10, 14, 35, 39 and 41) the Lord placed great emphasis on this particular aspect of Karmayoga. From Rudra, Indra, downwards, none is free from passion. It is only a question of degree. Hence, the performance of duty in a spirit of religious devotion is more important than the other elements.

In judging between the commentaries of the three great authors, the following points may be noted.

(1) Ramanujacharya and Sankaracharya leave God severely alone in the discussion. They do not lay any stress on divine devotion as an element of Karmayoga. They treat with scant attention, the passages in which the Lord speaks of “मत्परत्व” as an important factor. Sri Madhwa places the utmost emphasis on this aspect. He takes stand on the fundamental position that the purport, drift, and function of the Shastras is to bring out the greatness of God.

(2) Ramanujacharya's commentary comes to this, that Arjuna was a man of sullied ignorance defective memory, and therefore put a question which had been

already put and answered, and that he could not make out his own position as unfit, mentally, for *gnanayoga*. Sankaracharya distinctly classes Arjuna not only among non-seers but among non-seers of the lowest order, among *non-viraktas*, persons who are mere toys of passion. On the other hand, Sri Madhwa takes Arjuna to be a seer whose true vision might he dim for the time being, but who was by no means an ignoramus.

It is Sri Madhwa's commentary that makes it unnecessary to attribute dullness, forgetfulness, ignorance and passion, to Arjuna. Having imbibed Sri Krishna's teachings and given due value to every one of the points taught, Arjuna is eager to know more and draws attention to a point of great importance not yet dealt with.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

2) संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥

श्रीभगवान्; उवाच	...	The Blessed Lord said
संन्यासः	...	Renunciation of desire
कर्मयोगः	...	devotional performance of duty
च	...	and
निःश्रेयसकरौ	...	are productive of bliss
उभौ	...	both

तयोः	... of them
तु	... but
कर्मसंन्यासात्	... than renunciation of desire in actions
कर्मयोगः	... devotional performance
विशिष्यते	... is better

“The Lord said —

Renunciation and devotional performance of duty lead, both, to the highest bliss. But, as between the two, devotional performance is better than renunciation of desire.”

Much that may be relevant under this verse has already been anticipated under the last one, and no repetition is called for.

It is an established tenet of Hindu Religions that Sanyasa, the fourth Order, is the highest of the religious Orders. The verse under comment puts *Karmayoga* above Sanyasa. If by Sanyasa be meant the order of asceticism, it is well-nigh impossible to reconcile the Geeta dictum with the established view on the point.

The first line of the verse says that both are good. This may be true, if each is adapted to a separate individual, or if both be adapted to one and the same person. The school of Sankaracharya holds that the two are adapted to two distinct stages of a seeker. One who is a Virakta, i.e. high in spiritual culture and self-con-

trol, is fit for the Sanyasa Order. One who is not so qualified is fit for the other. The latter is the first step and the former is the next higher one, both having *gnana* for the final goal.

It is the second line that presents the chief difficulty. If *Karmayoga* be better than Sanyasa, in what sense is this true? Sankaracharya and Sankarananda think that the Lord only meant to praise Karmayoga and did not really intend to place it above Sanyasa (ascetic Order). This explanation is feeble. Arjuna is seriously in earnest to know their relative value conclusively. Why should Sri Krishna give a wrong answer in praise of *Karmayoga*?

Other commentators of the same school say that, having regard to Arjuna's low and poor spiritual culture, the statement is true, for he was not yet fit for Sanyasa. But the question and answer are general, and obviously deal with the comparative merits of the two things, irrespective of any particular votary's personal fitness. Moreover, it is not a sound view that Arjuna was really an ignorant unqualified person.

Others, again, explain, saying that the Sanyasa condemned here as inferior, is not *true* Sanyasa, but one that is not based on, or associated with *gnana*. On the other hand, they seem to think that *Karmayoga* held up as superior, is one that is adopted by the right person with all the necessary qualifications. In this explanation, the meaning is severely strained by means of limitations not found in the verse.

Other fanciful explanations to reconcile what is apparently irreconcilable have also been resorted to. The examples given may, however, suffice.

But why should the word *Sanyasa* be taken, necessarily to denote the *order* technical, of asceticism. In the next coming verse, Sri Krishna defines the word without reference to any technical sense, and says "one who neither hates nor desires is a Sanyasin". So, if, as Sri Mahdwa construes the word, it means only renunciation, it is quite easy to reconcile all that has been said in the verse without recourse to any strained interpretation. A true seeker must practise, *at one and the same time, both reunciation of desire and devotional performance of duty*, for, both are essential for his salvation.

Arjuna tried to choose between them, and the Lord says there can be no choice, for both together are good and essential for his salvation. Arjuna tried to choose between them, and the Lord says there can be no choice, for both together are good and essential. But between the two, if the truth is to be known as to which is better in fact, the Lord satisfies Arjuna's curiosity and tells him that yoga is better, because, as already set forth under the last verse, it implies devotion to God, and nothing is so good as this among the equipments of the seeker. This interpretation raises no conflict between the Geetic statement and the universally accepted dictum about the supremacy of the Sanyasa Order. It also avoids the necessity of making Arjuna dull or foolish, as Venkatanatha and Sankarananda do.

3) त्रेयस्स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न कांक्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥

त्रेयः	...	It is to be recollected that
सः	...	he
नित्यसंन्यासी	...	is ever a renouncer
यः	...	who
न द्वेष्टि	...	does not hate
न कांक्षति	...	does not desire
निर्द्वन्द्वः	...	free from pairs (of opposites)
हि	...	indeed
महाबाहो	...	O ! Mighty-armed
सुखं	...	easily
बन्धात्	...	from bondage (Samsara)
प्रमुच्यते	...	he is freed

“It is to be recollected that he is a perpetual renouncer who neither hates nor desires. One who is free from pairs of opposites is, indeed, easily liberated from bondage”.

True Sanyasa consists in renunciation of ‘desire’ and the whole host of wordly temptations that dominate the animal world. Arujna understood sanyasa in this sense and asked to know the relative value of this Sanyasa compared with yoga or devotional work, or perhaps he understood verse 41, Chapter IV

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं to refer to the ascetic order and based a question on this idea. Either way, the lord answered his doubt by pointing out that, by Sanyasa, he never meant the ascetic order (आश्रम), but only renunciation of desire. Laying stress on this meaning of Sanyasa in the first line, the lord explains in the second line of the present verse that the man who is free from the domination of love and hate, pleasure and pain, attractions and repulsions, is on an easy path to Heaven. This observation is intended to throw light on and elucidate the remark in the last verse that Sanyasa as well as yoga both lead to the highest bliss.

The reader must observe the two points mentioned in the last verse (No.2), viz., (i) Sanyasa and karmayoga are both good; (ii) of them, Karmayoga is better. Sri Madhwa thinks that the verse under comment (No.3) is explanatory of the first point and indicates the merits of Sanyasa understood in the sense of desire-renunciation.

Sankaracharya and most of his followers, as also Ramanujacharya, connect the verse with the second point (i.e. second line of verse no.2) and think that the Lord here shows how karmayoga is superior to Sanyasa (asceticism).

Reading the verse with care, one finds it difficult to see where this alleged superiority has been mentioned. The first line speaks of the man who hates not and loves not, and says he is to be regarded as an ascetic. To regard him as an ascetic is very different from saying that he is superior to an ascetic.

In the second line, he who has transcended the domination of opposites is said to be easily liberated from bondage. The doubt is, who is the man? *Is he the same individual that is* spoken of in the Sanyasin, or some one else? By saying 'easily', is it meant that his progress is simpler, greater than that of any other, and if so, who is that other person?

Neelakanta thinks that the first line speaks of the house-holder who, having cast off hate and love, may be regarded equal to an ascetic, but that the second line deals not with him but only with *a man of ascetic order*, who unburdened with family cares, is journeying towards salvation with ease and facility. If this be the chief predication of the verse, what becomes of this author's own introductory remark that the present verse is intended to make out and explain the superiority of the house holder over the ascetic. Utkarsha Deepika, for this reason, condemns Neelakanta's interpretation.

Sankarananda and Venkatanatha do not flinch from the conclusion, as some others do, and say that the verse lays down the superiority of a *true* karmayogin over a *false* and *unworthy* Sanyasin. But there is nothing to justify the epithets 'false' and 'unworthy' prefixed to the Sanyasin. What is there in the text to show that a *true* Yogin and a *false ascetic* are the persons compared?

Madhusoodana feels difficulty in laying his finger on the word or words which lay dow the superiority of the karmayogin over the ascetic. He therefore

thinks that the verse has nothing to do with the ascetic or his relative superiority or inferiority, but that it speaks only of the karmayogin and praises him with regard to his intrinsic worth apart from any question of his relative importance. He limits the words *hates* and *loves* to relate respectively to *hate of selfless duty* and *love of Swarga*. So limited they denote the Karmayogin who loves no reward and does not avoid selfless duty. In the second line, निर्द्वन्द्व denotes the same karmayogin. बन्ध, literally bondage, is the impediment such as mental impurity that obstruct the path.

This rendering is ingenious and avoids some obvious difficulties. But the words द्वेष्टि, कांक्षति and निर्द्वन्द्व are forced to convey very narrowed meaning contrary to their ordinary and natural sense. In these circumstances, Sri Madhwa adopts a meaning that steers clear of every difficulty. He holds that the verse does not undertake to explain how and why Karmayoga is superior to asceticism (for the simple reason that this is untenable) and that it pointedly states that Sanyasa is to be understood in a liberal and literal sense, not technical, and that the verse concludes by drawing attention to the intrinsic value of *desire-renunciation*, although this may be, if and when compared to devotional duty, inferior to it, in truth.

4) सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।

एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यग्भयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥

सांख्ययोगौ	... Sankhya and yoga
पृथक्	... distinct
बालाः	... youngsters
प्रवदन्ति	... say
न, पण्डिताः	... not pandits
एकं	... one
अपि	... even
आस्थितः	... staying in
सम्यक्	... well
उभयोः	... of both
विन्दते	... attains
फलं	... the fruit

“Youngsters (the ignorant) say that Sankhya and Yoga are distinct. He who stays well even in one of them, attains the fruit of both.”

Shastras say that Sanyasa or disattachment leads to *gnana*, and that *Karma* is an obstructive enemy thereof. This being so, how can Karma-performance be good? much less, can it be deemed superior to sanyasa. — This is the doubt that the verse deals with.

The answer is that the scriptural passages censuring *karma* are those relating to *Kamyā* (mercenary) *karma*. As to motiveless duties performed with devotion, this is true *yoga*, and as such, it is not a path distinct from Sankhya, because both are necessary for the

seeker. It is a mistake to think that there are two distinct ways called *gnanamarga* and *Karmamarga*. No doubt, the ascetic is said to be in *gnanamarga* and the house-holder in the latter. But, truly, there is no difference in principle between them in respect to their duties and work. It may be that the ascetic has to *do less* and *think* more than the grihastha. But it is only a question of degree. Both have to rely on *gnana* and *karma*, and each can compass the end without being compelled to pass through the other Asrama (order). Thus, the observation that *yoga* is a guide to bliss is well-founded.

It is hardly necessary to point out that Sankhya and Yoga do not stand here for systems of those names founded by Kapila and Patanjali. For, Vedanta does not accept those systems.

In chapter II, verse 39, the Lord used these words in the sense of 'knowledge' and 'practice', and it is the sense more or less throughout.

Sankaracharya and his followers justify the statement that Yoga and Sankhya are both good on the footing that the former is a preparation for the latter and the latter alone leads to *gnana*. They always feel a bit nervous in meeting any passage that extols *yoga* or *karma*. They feel special elation over passages relating to *Gnana*, *Sankhya* or *Sanyasa*. Their inclination is to keep *karma* within the zone of the ignorant and the deluded.

Ramanujacharya explains the proposition that *Sanyasa* and *Karmayoga* are *both* good, on the ground

that each is independently a guide to *gnana* and *bliss*. So holds Sri Madhwa also.

Neelakanta commits two errors in commenting on this verse, *viz.*,—

(i) He formulates Arjuna's doubt thus:— sanyasa has its perils and pitfalls. It hurls severe penalties at lapses and mistakes. Yoga is equally difficult because of the hardships involved in work. Both being thus unwelcome, which is better?

To answer this, the Lord says that *Sankhya* and *Yoga* are virtually one.

The doubt as formulated by Neelakanta does not appear to be clear or well-founded. If Arjuna thought that both were unwelcome, he would hardly ask again as to which was preferable. He had been told distinctly that *Karmayoga* was better. Why should he press that point again, unless he had something fresh in his mind, which required further light? Utkarsha Deepika condemns this introductory note of Neelakanta as inappropriate.

(ii) According to Neelakanta, *Sankhya* and *Yoga* stand for the *unconditioned absolute* reached by *Sanyasa* and *Karmayoga*. He dwells on the etymology of सांख्य and योग, goes into elaborate technicalities of *Adwaita*, explains and adopts Patanjali's definition of *Yoga*, and concludes how *Sankhya* and *Yoga* here mean *Brahman*. As Sankaracharya here understands *yoga* in the sense of *Karmayoga*, Neelakanta being at vari-

ance with his Acharya, Utkarsha Deepika condemns Neelakanta. We, of course, take exception to his jargon of etymology and the conclusion too, as wrong and out of place.

5) यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥

यत्	... what
सांख्यैः	... by Sankhyas
प्राप्यते	... is obtained
स्थानं	... the goal
तत्	... that
योगैः	... by yogins
अपि	... also
गम्यते	... is reached
एकं	... one
सांख्यं	... Sankhya
च	... and
योगं	... Yoga
च	... also
यः	... who
पश्यति	... sees
सः	... he
पश्यति	... sees

"Whatever goal is attained by Sankhyas, that is reached by Yogins, too. Who sees Sankhya and Yoga as one is the true seer".

The second line of the last verse declared that whoever stays well either in Sankhya or Yoga attains the fruit of both. This calls for some explanation. It may mean, "of these two, viz., Sankhya and Yoga, each leads to a certain end." If each leads to an end, it does not follow that both lead to the same end, and, in this case, the predication of identity is wrong. Or, the construction of the said line may be that each leads to the common end of both. This would mean that *karma* and *gnana* joined together produce a certain end. But what is that end? The Shastras say that emancipation is the effect of Gnana (सांख्य) only. Karma can never produce God-vision or lead to मोक्ष.

Thus, the doubt is created as to what is the sense in relation to which, the identity of Sankhya and Yoga is declared. The Lord answers this doubt here. He says, the goal is the same. This is true in two ways. One is that *Karma* leads to purity of mind, and, coupled with studies and meditation, produces God-vision which leads to the goal.

Although the final goal is the immediate result of *gnana*, *karma* is also a guide to that end in the manner explained, although not the proximate cause, but is a remote cause by a degree or two. In another view also, Sankhya and Yoga are one. These words often mean *the path of gnana* and *the path of karma*. The

former path is trodden by the ascetics, *i.e.* persons of the Fourth Order (yatis). The latter is taken by householders (Grihastas).

The former have less of external work, duties and rituals, to go through, than the latter. For this reason, however, it is not to be thought that the two paths are distinct and divergent. Each of these implies a course of work coupled with one of knowledge, and each, by itself, is a full course calculated to lead the votary to the common goal, independently of the other. It is the cult of some that *gnanamarga* involves no work or duties at all, and that *Karmamarga* involves no studies, instruction, or knowledge. These people also think that no householder, however perfect, can get to the goal, unless he has passed through the ascetic order. All this is fallacious. The Lord says that both *gnanamarga* and *karmamarga* are one and the same virtually, as both are, individually, guides to the same end. Emphasis has to be placed on the word "well" (सम्यक्) in the last line of the foregoing verse. Either Sankhya or Yoga well done involves a complete and thorough course of work and study.

The words Sankhya and Yoga are somewhat perplexing. From verse 39 of chapter III, one might think, at first, that these denote two distinct courses, with independent rules and observances and ends. On the contrary, we see, as in the present verse (No. 5 of chapter V), the same identity stated repeatedly in Santi Parva of the Mahabharatha. In chapter 306, we find the Geeta verse occurring almost verbatim. In chapter

321, in the dialogue between Yagnavalkya and Janaka, the virtual identity of the two courses is explained. They are related like theory and practice, volition and execution, in the pursuit of a common end.

6) संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्नुमयोगतः ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

संन्यासः	... renunciation
तु	... but
महाबाहो	... O! Mighty-armed
दुःखं	... misery, suffering
आप्नुं	... to bring on
अयोगतः	... without yoga
योगयुक्तः	... with yoga
मुनिः	... the Muni
ब्रह्म	... Mukti
न चिरेण	... swiftly
अधिगच्छति	... reaches

“But renunciation brings on suffering, O! Mighty-armed, bereft of yoga. With yoga, the Muni swiftly reaches Mukti”.

To the statement that *karmayoga* was better than *Sanyasa* (verse 2), the objector urged the well-established superiority of the ascetic *order*. The Lord replied

that he used not *संन्यास* in the technical sense to denote the Order (verse 3). The objector next urged that *karma* being hostile to *gnana*, both could not be bliss-giving (निःश्रेयसकरौ). The Lord answered this by verses 4 and 5, pointing out the unity of Sankhya and Yoga. The objections being thus met, the Lord proceeds to show how and why Sanyasa necessarily goes hand in hand with Yoga (verse 6).

The verse says that mere renunciation of desire leads only to misery, if the man leaves God out of account and does not karma. In suppressing the senses, there is suffering. By no doing *ordained karma*, hell is in store. For the huge discipline undergone to kill temptations and subdue desires, one deserves Mukti as a legitimate reward. But he gets, in its place, some little temporal tranquillity or mental peace, which is hardly worth mentioning, compared to the Release he ought to get. Hence mere Renunciation is no good.

Coupled with true devotional performace (yoga), the conquest of the senses (*संन्यास*) leads to lofty results. By *Muni* is meant the man who has renounced desire, anger etc. Thus is the logic :— To dissociate Sanyasa from Yoga spells disaster. To associate it with Yoga leads to the highest good. Therefore, both should be practised together.

We have said before, that *Karmayoga* has two elements in it, *viz.*, Renunciation and Yoga. The present verse says that Renunciation should take the shape of *karmayoga* in order to be beneficial.

Advaitic commentators speak of संन्यास (यत्तित्व) under the headings of *true* and *false*. The false ascetic is the rash man who takes the Order, although his mind is not qualified and ripe. It is he that was, according to this school, set down lower than the Karmayogin in verse 2. The true ascetic stands on a higher level than the karmayogin, for, karmayoga is but a stepping stone to true asceticism. The Geeta verse under comment declares that, without *yoga*, true asceticism is hard to secure. On the other hand, *karmayoga*, if duly practised, leads one to be *Brahman* which is rendered in sankara bhashya to mean the *true ascetic*.

Ramanujacharya explains the verse, consistently with the view throughout maintained by him, that *karmayoga* is superior to *Gnanayoga*. He holds that the former is an easier and swifter course than the latter. The present verse, according to him, sets out the superiority of *karmayoga* to *gnanayoga* easier in practice and quicker in fruit.

In the second line, whereas Sankaracharya pitches on the word ब्रह्म to mean the *ascetic*, Madhusoodana, Sridhara and Venakatanath select the word मुनि for that very purpose.

According to them, the rendering is "The Karmayogin becomes true ascetic (मुनि) and attains to Brahman (Release)". Thus योगयुक्तः, मुनिः and ब्रह्म mark three successive steps.

It is difficult to follow the reasoning whereby the proposition that *karmayoga* is superior to *संन्यास* has been mutilated and virtually reversed. The unworthy ascetic stands ever self-condemned, by virtue of his own want to merit. He could not have been contemplated in verse 2, when *संन्यास* and *karmayoga* were both praised as lofty, and, as between them, one was set over the other. As already pointed out, if *संन्यास* is not understood in the technical sense of "the ascetic order" there is no need for the distinction between the true and the false sanyasin and for reading the said two meanings at random in the same word, without any good reason at all.

Even in the first line, there is some difference between Sankaracharya and Madhusoodana. The former reads it to mean "True sanyasa is hard to reach without *yoga*". The latter renders it to mean, "*false* sanyasa leads to misery without *yoga*".

7) योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥

योगयुक्तः	... engaged in yoga
विशुद्धात्मा	... pure in nature
विजितात्मा	... of conquered mind
जितेन्द्रियः	... of conquered senses
सर्वभूत-आत्मभूत-	... convinced that the Lord of all is
-आत्मा	also his Lord

कुर्वन् अपि ... though engaged in work
न लिप्यते ... is not affected by sin

“The Karmayogin, pure by nature, of conquered mind and senses, convinced that the inward Ruler of all is also his Ruler, is not affected by sin, though engaged in work.”

The verse is in further explanation of the last one, pointing out how Yoga and Sanyasa joined together are blissful. The first half-line explains what was stated in No.3, where renunciation of hate and desire was spoken of. That renunciation is now said to be the result of a pure-minded man conquering mental and sensual temptations. The second line is in explanation of verse No.6 where the Muni was spoken of as reaching Mukti swiftly. The attainment of Mukti is, in the present verse, explained to be through knowledge. The performer of good karma reaches emancipation only through the door of knowledge.

It was said in the commentary of the previous verses that sanyasa should rise to be Yoga in order to be fruitful. That it does, when the renouncer is fixed steadily in God. सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा means, as explained in Geeta Tatparya, one whose mind is fixed in God, the inward Ruler of the Universe.

The yoga in the compound word योगयुक्तः means either Karmayoga or the devotional performance forming one of the two factors of Karmayoga. In the latter sense, the words विशुद्धात्मा, विजितात्मा and जितेन्द्रियः con-

note संन्यास or renunciation which is the complement making up Karmayoga along with devotion. Almost all the commentators understand yoga on this vere to mean karmayoga. Neelakanta, however, chalks out a new line and gives an elaborate explanation of the word so as to mean the deep trance of the meditative Yogin. It is difficult to see how the context here is exclusively confined to the elements of karmayoga and its superiority to Sanyasa. Therefore the meditative trance of Rishis seems out of place here. So thinks the author of Sankara Bhashyotkarsha Deepika, who criticises and rejects Neelakanta's explanation. Such a criticism coming from the same school carries, of course, special weights.

The verse ends with the clause "He is not affected, though engaged in work."

The force of the expression "though engaged in work" is based on the general proposition that work is a fetter and knowledge is a liberator. No doubt, unselfish work is not a fetter. But broadly stated, as in Manu, work is conducive to bondage and knowledge of God tends to liberation.

It is possible to read "अकुर्वन्नपि लिप्यते" so as to mean that the seer is not bound by rigid rules of work and that transgressions, in his case, are innocuous. But the context does not quite favour this meaning, because the whole point of the lesson is that the seer does work and ought to work.

We may next consider why the seer ought to work. Sankara Bhashya thinks that he works only to guide the world and merely to set an example. Sankarananda differs from this view and thinks that the seer does not engage himself in any work or duty whatsoever, otherwise than to keep body and soul together.

Sri Madhwa thinks that the seer, taking it in the broadest sense, does work before god-vision for attaining the same, and after god-vision, for the evolution of the full measure of bliss in mukti. According to him, the seeker and the seer are always bound to work.

The most difficult expression in this verse is सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा. Sankaracharya construes it to mean one who regards his own self as identical with the self in everything. The reference is, according to him, to the identity of the individual and the supreme self (Jeeva and Brahman). Ramanujacharya thinks that this expression connotes not the identity of all souls, but the equality, in a sense, of all the souls. One who thinks that his own soul is in essence equal to the souls of all the Gods, of all the men, and of the entire cosmos, is the seer referred to.

According to Sri Madhwa, the seer who is not affected by sins is not the man who thinks of identity of equality, but one who regards God as the master of the whole universe.

The Sanskrit word आत्मा is, no doubt, very elastic and gives rise to many a shade of thought. Sri Madhwa rejects the notions of universal identity and equality

as opposed to the Shastras. Ramanujacharya's idea of equality is rather curious. He thinks that all the Devas, Rishis men and animals down to the lowest of creatures are unequal by reason of graduated bodies and that the soul or spirit is in no way concerned with this aspect of material inequality. Why beings should be literally unequal, if the inequality is not traceable to, or in rooted any sense, in the soul or spirit, seems difficult to comprehend. The word Atma is interpreted in a well-known verse of the Mahabharata. (*vide* sanskrit exposition). The purport is that 'God is Atma, because He is perfect, accepts the homage of all, enjoys the universe as His food and abides for ever as the absolute'. Hence, in the present context, the seer regards God, the Universal Master, as His own Master.

There is some controversy between Sankaracharya and Madhusoodana in respect to the meaning of सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा. Madhusoodana differs from his Guru and even criticises him, while other followers of the Guru take sides against Madhusoodana, and attack his criticism. Without entering into the details of this little controversy, we may note that Madhusoodana describes the seer as one who considers himself as of the same substance as the world, just as gold is the material cause of the bangle, (उपादानवाद), whereas Sankaracharya seems to place the identity on another basis विवर्तवाद.

In the first line of the Geeta verse, the words are not very difficult to construe. Madhusoodana thinks that विशुद्धात्मा relates to the restraint of the mind,

विजितात्मा to the restraint of body, and जितेन्द्रियः to restraints of speech. Thus the three conquests are victories over the mind, the body and the speech. Others don't follow him in this meaning, but the difference among the commentators does not affect the main idea that self-restraint is the characteristic of the seer.

8) नैव किंचित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।

पश्यन्शृण्वन्स्पृशन्जिघ्रन्श्चक्षन्स्वपन्श्चसन् ॥

9) प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥

न, एव	...	not at all
किंचित्	...	anything
करोमि	...	I do
इति	...	thus
युक्तः	...	the Yogin
मन्येत	...	shall consider
तत्त्ववित्	...	the knower of truth
पश्यन्	...	seeing
शृण्वन्	...	hearing
स्पृशन्	...	touching
जिघ्रन्	...	smelling

अश्नन्	...	eating
गच्छन्	...	walking
स्वपन्	...	sleeping
श्वसन्	...	breathing
प्रलपन्	...	speaking
विसृजन्	...	expelling (excreta and semen)
गृह्णन्	...	holding
उन्मिपन्	...	raising the eyelids
निमिषन्	...	closing the eyelids
अपि	...	also
इन्द्रियाणि	...	the senses
इन्द्रियार्थेषु	...	in the sense-objects
वर्तन्ते	...	dwell
इति	...	thus
धारयन्	...	convinced

“The Yogin shall consider that he does nothing at all, engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, evacuating, holding, opening or shutting eyelids, too, convinced that the senses dwell in the sense-objects.”

We have been dealing with Yoga and Sanyasa. Renunciation of desire and its brood has been said to be संन्यास properly understood. The Lord adds that the idea of independent volition should be renounced. The True Actor in everything is God, whatever act

we may be engaged in, be it ever so trifling, from the involuntary shutting or opening of the eyelids, the exhaling or inhaling of breath, to the functions of the ten senses of knowledge and action; all is under the governance of God. The conviction shall be that the senses dwell in their objects *by His will*. This is renunciation on our part of *Sankalpa* (proposals of work). "Man proposes, God disposes" is a well-known saying. Truly speaking, we are no free agents to propose or carry out any measure or action.

It may be observed that the second line of verse 8 and the first line of verse 9 cover the entire field of human activity. The eye, ear, touch, smell and tongue are first referred to. गच्छन् refers to feet, गृह्णन्, to hands, प्रलयन्, to speech, विसृजन्, to the excretal and private organs. Even sleep is not omitted, nor is respiration. To show the universality of the statement as applicable to every function, the action of the eyelids, too, has been mentioned. In the senses and the Pranas thus functioning, there is God. He acts through them all. To be thus convinced means a conviction of human powerlessness, and *in this* consists renunciation of *Sankalpa*.

No doubt, renunciation of desire and its issue is *Sanyasa*. But *Sankalpa* or volition is the parent of desire. We begin with the thought, 'I shall do this,' and then comes the wish to achieve the same. In Santi Parva the verse occurs, "O! desire, I know your origin. You are born of *Sankalpa*. I shall not indulge in proposals, and you (काम or desire) shall cease to be, root and branch".

Verse 8 asserts that the seer should think "I do nothing." But as a matter of fact, he does everything, the senses and the pranas being at work. Advaitic commentators explain this by saying that the seer having realized *Unity*, is conscious of no action at all, for everything is mythical as in a mirage, save Brahman. Karma being false, the seer thinks truly that he does nothing.

But surely, the verse says nothing about the unreality of the Universe, including all action and activity. If the statement is to be understood with reference to the seer's point of view, does the seer of realized Unity think that he does nothing? For, even this thought is not admissible to him, the निर्विकल्प Brahman being the only flash of consciousness, if at all, that obtains in that state. Or again, does this seer indulge in the thought that senses dwell in the sense-objects? If he thinks that there is no work, in truth, he thinks, for the same reason, that the senses and objects are false also, and never does he, or can he, think of the senses, objects and their relation. It is thus difficult to see how न करोमि can be a reference to the unreality of karma.

In construing the last line of verse No.9, (इन्द्रियाणि etc.) the said commentators make out the meaning to be that 'senses are the true actors in work'. They are free agents and workers. The mind does all the internal functions, and the exterior organs, the external ones. As for the self or soul, he conceives nothing and carries out nothing.

But the senses are acknowledged on all hands to be *matter* in essence and composition, and matter is what is void of intelligence or consciousness. How can there be volition without a willer? If no Jeeva or Soul governs the mind and the senses, the whole fabric of religion fails and collapses.

Ramanujacharya's stand-point in construing the first line (No.8) and the last line (No.9) does not seem far different. No doubt he relies not on the Unreality of the Universe, for, to him, everything is real. But he says that the true self is no actor, as he is knowledge in essence, that action is the result of matter operating on the self, that this relation is responsible for all notions of human work and activity.

So, according to him, the senses are more or less free agents, all work being traceable to the accident of the senses operating on the Self.

Sri Madhwa holds that the *true* actor is not the senses but God. Matter is but a tool and can never be deemed an actor.

This may cause a doubt whether man is a responsible being or not. If he be no actor, it follows that he is not accountable for sins, *nor* can he claim credit for merits.

The answer is that, although God is the true inspirer of all, the individual souls are also actors in a subordinate sense. They are the instruments of His will, and His will acts with reference to the

character, capacity and merits, of every Jeeva. God is just and impartial, His law being to regulate the working of the Universe with reference to Karma, Swabhava and other factors, that differentiate man from man.

The 17th Adhikarana of Brahma Sootra II, 3, deals with '*the agency of the Jeeva* under the will of God' in 10 aphorisms. If the Jeeva be no actor, it will be futile for the Shastras to address him in words of command "Do this, don't do this." As the carpenter working for an employer is but a dependent in a sense and a free worker, too, in another, so man is a worker in a sense, but truly, he is ever under His guidance and inspiration.

10) ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवांभसा ॥

ब्रह्मणि	...	In Brahman
आधाय	...	depositing
कर्माणि	...	doings
सङ्गं	...	attachment
त्यक्त्वा	...	abandoning
करोति	...	does
यः	...	whoever
लिप्यते न	...	is not affected
सः	...	he

पापेन ... by sin
 पद्मपत्रम् इव ... like the lotus leaf
 अंभसा ... by water

"Whoever performs work, having made over all doings to Brahman and given up attachment, he is not affected by sin as the lotus leaf is not, by water".

It has been pointed out already that *karmayoga* is incomplete unless two elements combine. They are (1) abandonment of passion, and (2) work done and made over to God. The present verse is intended to affirm this as an invariable rule. Without a simultaneous and harmonious combination of both, *Karmayoga* is out of the question.

To make over all sections to Brahman is to realize that God is the source of all energy, that He is the true doer and enjoyer, that man is but a tool in His hands and that God gets work done by us for our own good.

The three Bhashyakaras have interpreted the word Brahman (ब्रह्मणि) in *three* ways. Sri Madhwa takes it to mean "*the God Supreme*". Sankaracharya understands it to denote ईश्वर *the Lower Brahman*, the conditioned Ruler, the सगुणब्रह्म. Ramanujacharya construes the word to mean *Prakriti* (Matter). These views require some comment.

To take Ramaujacharya's first, the purport of his exposition may be stated thus:— "To work is not the province of the soul. Senses are the true doers. This truth was taught already. To one who realizes it, the reward is that he mistakes not the body for the soul. This is the sin (पाप) that the verse says he escapes from".

This interpretation is open to some obvious objections. (1) The word *Brahman*, no doubt, does mean Prakriti in some rare Vedic passages. But, here, there is no reason for not taking that well-known word in the well-known sense of God. (2) It is not enough for Ramunjacharya's purposes that ब्रह्म should mean Prakriti. He has to go further and understand Prakriti to mean, here, the senses that take part in actions. This involves a further strain. (3) It is not a very great lesson of philosophy, after all, to think, for example, that when the wood-cutter fells a tree, it is the axe that cuts and not the man. For, the interpretation amounts to this when it is said that, in all actions, the senses are the doers. (4) The verse speaks of "sin" to denote here the belief known as *materialism*, the delusion that our body is our soul. A word of general import पाप is, without any special reason, restricted and narrowed so as to mean the materialist's delusion alone. (5) If the verse does not contemplate any reference to God, or to sins, as usually understood, the individual who realizes that his senses are the true doers and himself is free from doing, has no reason to engage in any work whatever. If

his will comes into play at all, it must tend to idleness and inaction, because there is no object in letting the senses work away, so as to give room, occasionally at least, for the delusion of materialistic beliefs.

Sankaracharya thinks that the text relates to the "non-wise" (अविद्वान्) individual, as distinguished from verses, like 7 and 8, which treat of the sage (विद्वान्). In the case of the sage, it was said that he is above the stain of sins, because he regards them as false. In respect to the non-sage, the present verse points out how he may avoid incurring the stain, by making over his actions to Brahman. Brahman here means Iswara, the conditioned Being like Rama and Krishna, and not the Para Brahman of Vedanta.

I am unable to see any valid and sufficient ground for holding that verses 7 and 8 apply to the sage, while the present verse applies to the non-sage.

Nor is there any ground for the view that Brahman here means the lower Brahman, *the Saguna God*, as distinguished from the Nirguna. The members of this school are particularly given to this kind of interchanging, often interpreting this word to mean the Lower or Higher Brahman just as it suits their fancy.

In verse No.7, the words (न लिप्यते) = "*is not affected*" were justified on the footing that the sage looks on the world as mirage. Here the same words (न लिप्यते) are construed to mean that the doer attains

purity of mind only. There is nothing in the text to warrent this differentiation.

In commenting on the phrase सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा = *abandoning attachment*, Sankaracharya says that the doer should not desire even Moksha. It is hardly consistent to say that the person here referred to is *the non-sage*, but that he is so disinterested in his work as to banish even Moksha from his desires. In truth, it is quite justifiable and proper for anyone to aspire for Moksha.

Some commentators of this very school do not agree with their master in saying that verses 7 and 8 speak of the sage and the present one of the non-sage. Utkarsha Deepika quotes one who thus ventures to differ, and criticises him.

Taking Brahman to mean the Higher Brahman and the doer in question to be the sage (तत्त्ववित्), the dissenting commentator interprets the verse thus: "The sage may be said to incur bondage in two ways. By doing work, (1) he may create for himself *merit* (सुकृत) and become bound to enjoy its fruit; or (2) he may incur sin by grasping at other's wealth or effects in doing work, or by allowing room for greed and passions. Sri Krishna here negatives both. As the sage makes over all work to Brahman (ब्रह्मण्याधाय), it is incapable of producing any merit which may compel bondage. As he is free from greed and passion (सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा), he cannot possibly incur sin".

Utkarsha Deepika, being unable to tolerate a dissent from Sankara Bhasya, points out that the sage doing work and making it over to Brahman is incongruous, for, having realized the falsity of everything, the sage does no work, and much less, does he dedicate any to Brahman. There is undoubtedly incongruity as pointed out, if it be allowed that the sage is one who is incapable of, and has risen above, any kind of work. But Dwaitins do not accept this definition of the sage; for, they expect him to go through work and duties even in his "post-vision" life for the evolution of full bliss in Vykunta.

The dissent expressed by the Advaitic commentator criticised by Utkarsha Deepika is, however, not without significance. It shows that the arbitrary mutation of the two grades of Brahman and telling off verses at will to apply now to the sage and now to the non-sage, does not commend itself to all the disciples of Sankaracharya.

The verses, it may be seen, are comprehensively worded. They may apply to the God-visioned sage as well as the God-seeking sage. Both alike may engage in work and avoid being affected. The stain in each case may differ. But this hardly matters in determining the purport of the text.

It seems to me, therefore, that *Brahman* in the text is *Brahman*, the Supreme. There is no ground to take the Lower Brahman, as Monists do, nor Prakriti and the senses, as Ramanujacharya does.

11) कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति संगं त्यक्त्वाऽऽत्म-शुद्धये ॥

कायेन	...	By the body
मनसा	...	by the mind
बुद्ध्या	...	by the Reason
केवलैः	...	merely
इन्द्रियैः	...	by the senses
अपि	...	also
योगिनः	...	the yogins
कर्म	...	action
कुर्वन्ति	...	perform
संगं	...	attachment
त्यक्त्वा	...	abandoning
आत्मशुद्धये	...	for mental purity

“Yogins perform action, merely by the body, by the mind, by the Reason, and by the senses, abandoning attachment for the sake of mental purity.”

Sri Krishna quotes the example of great men to impress the truth it is only ‘*Sanyasa*’ and ‘*Yoga*’ combined that bear fruit. *Dispassion* and *dedicated work* are the two things to be harmoniously joined. Yogins have done so, of old, and it is their worthy example that should be followed.

The word योगिनः is intended to point out the greatness of the doer whose example is quoted. With this, 'अपि' (in the first line) may be coupled. The meaning is "Even Yogins do action thus. Much more, therefore, should others do likewise."

This word अपि (which means 'even' 'also') changes the sense materially, according as it is linked with one word or another. If the purport of the verse be in praise of the Yogin's example, with a view to others imitating the same, the best construction is, to read अपि with योगिनः. The author of Vivriti adopts this construction.

It may be seen that the combination of संन्यास (*dispassion*) with योग (*dedicated work*) is not a point not taught so far. Hence there should be some reason for the repetition. That is found in the circumstance that the object is to point out the example of great men. In this view as to the object and purport of the text, Sridhara, Venkatanatha and Desikar, also concur.

The word 'अपि' (even), has been linked by Sankarananda with कायेन. According to him, the meaning of the line is "Wishing to do a thing *by the mind*, resolving to do so *by the Reason*, they do it then *even by the body*, (कायेनापि). In other words, it is not the Mind and the Reason alone that are engaged in what may be called pious resolves, but the body too co-operates and carries them out."

Others join अपि with the word इन्द्रियैः, and their justification is that it is found so in the text itself. It is difficult to see force in this construction. It denotes no more than if the weak copulative conjunction 'and' had been used.

Another word 'केवलैः (merely)' requires some comment. The point being that action should be performed but its evil effects should be avoided, the word 'merely' shows that it is only *the senses, the mind, the reason, and the body*, that participate, while the doer is, all the time, free from egotism. Evil effects follow from actions only if the doer is actuated by egotism and self-assertion in his work, and if he relies too much on himself and too little on Providence.

Thus understood 'केवलैः' may properly go with all the words 1) कायेन, 2) मनसा, 3) बुद्ध्या, and 4) इन्द्रियैः.

This brings out the idea that the doer does work *merely* with the body, the Reason and the senses, and does not allow self-assertive egotism to meddle with it.

An annotator (whose name does not appear) thinks that the word (केवलैः) (merely) excludes monetary considerations from the motives of the doer. It is said that in whatever the Yogin does internally or externally, he is never actuated by money as the underlying motive.

It may be seen that, to indicate abandonment of mercenary motives, the second line of the text contains the phrase सङ्गत्यत्वा. It is therefore not necessary to read the same idea in the use of the word केवलैः (merely). Hence, the last word may well denote the exclusion of egotistic considerations; in other words, the belief of most doers that they are *free agents* and that God has no part to play in the work-a-day world.

In commenting on this word केवलैः, Vedanta Desikar finds a peculiar use for it. He takes कायेन to mean the body, including in it the organs of action, (hands, legs, organs of speech, excretion and generation). This being so, the word इन्द्रियैः in the verse stands for the senses of knowledge alone. (Ear, eye, tongue, touch and smell). The doubt may occur whether any merit accrues when the organs of knowledge come into play without the organs of action co-operating with them and completing the execution of the pious task in question. Desikar says, the word केवलैः denotes that the work of the *knowledge-senses* (ज्ञानेन्द्रिय) is by itself and without more, of great efficacy. Accordingly, केवलैरिन्द्रियैः means "by the knowledge-senses unaided by the organs of action".

This exposition of Vedanta Desikar is intended to give prominence to the truth that holy doings bless not only the doer, but others too who may simply look on, or only hear of, them, and so on, without themselves taking an active part in them. The belief

is well-founded enough that good works bless all that are associated with them, however remotely. It is based on a verse on the Mahabharata, Aswamedha Parva, ch.94, v.29:—

“धर्मः श्रुतो वा दृष्टो वा कथितो वा कृतोपि वा ।
अनुमोदितो वा राजेन्द्र पुनाति पुरुषं सदा ॥”

This means "Holy work simply heard of, seen, narrated, done, or approved of, sanctifies the man, O! king". By reading केवलैः with इन्द्रियैः and giving the latter the meaning of "*knowledge-senses*", although the word ordinarily denotes all the senses, Vedanta Desikar finds room for the truth above mentioned being read into the text. But it is not the work of the knowledge-senses alone that blesses the unparticipating individual. Even one who simply *approves of it in his mind* shares in the pious benefits. Hence, there is no good reason to link केवलैः with इन्द्रियैः alone; because, if the mind thinks and approves, that, too, brings on merit, although none of the knowledge-senses comes into play, nor, of course, the senses of action. Vedanta Desikar gives no grounds for not joining केवलैः with मनसा and बुद्ध्या of the text. However commendable this truth may be, the difficulty is whether the text contemplates a reference to it. The theme deals with work virtually regarded as *non-work*. Over and over again, we are being told how we may be working away, and yet not be stained by it. Everything connected with these two aspects *viz.*, (1) *work* and (2) *the absence of its evil effects*,

is relevant. These are the two points hitherto taught in various ways. The present verse simply quotes precedent (आचार) for the same. Desikar allows that this is so.

It seems to me, therefore, that collateral truths and side-issues will be out of place in such a context. We have not been told, in the preceding verses, of the truth that Dharma merely seen or assented to is meritorious. There is no need, therefore, to quote precedent for that. It fits in with the context that the word "merely" denotes the worker's purity of thought in that he works without egotism; while it is going off to a side-track to speak of truths such as Desikar refers to. These reflections may aid the reader in concluding that the text is really contemplating the performances of work, be it mental or physical, in a pure spirit.

The commentators of the Sankara school understand the verse also to relate to the *non-sage*. It may be remembered they construed verses 7 & 8 to refer to the *sage*, and verse 10 to refer to the *non-sage*. The present verse, according to them, goes with No.10 and continues the description of what the non-sage does. There is one expression in the verse that may well be said to justify this. It is the word (आत्मशुद्धये) — "*for the sake of mental purity*". This applies to the seeker rather than the seer.

It is not Sri Madhwa's opinion that these verses (7-8-10, etc.) should be thus distinguished and

allotted. The author of Vivriti has understood the reference in a comprehensive way so as to include the sage and the seeker alike. Advaitic commentaries feel a bit nervous whenever and wherever "performance of actions" is laid down. As far as possible, they try to restrict such passages to the "non-sage", although there be no words to warrant such a restricted construction.

The verse under notice is quite general in its wording and may apply to the *sage* as well as the *seeker* but for the single phrase आत्मशुद्धये. They think, probably, that the sage having stepped beyond this stage, the seeker alone must be the person contemplated. But why is the sage, truly speaking, entirely beyond the need for mental purity? There is no limit to aspirations in the direction of seeking Divine light; "more light" and "yet more", should be the ambition of the seeker as well as the sage. Work, dutifully and piously done by the sage, has its own reward in securing for him greater clearness of vision, more of Divine grace, and fuller evolution of bliss in Vykunta.

Sankaracharya's commentary of the verse is to this effect "The work of the seeker bears no other fruit than *purity of mind*. He works merely with the body, the mind, the Reason and the senses, without any notions of "*I & mine*" and dedicating fruits unto Iswara (God). His goal is to acquire mental purity. Therefore, O! Arjuna, do you perform action too, because you are qualified only for that and nothing higher."

In this comment, the reader may note the fling levelled at Arjuna that he is a crude, ignorant person whose level of spiritual qualification is far from high. This opinion as to Arjuna is not assented to by us. For reasons, the reader is referred to notes in chapter II, verses 39 and 47.

When Sankaracharya and his disciples refer to *Iswara* (God), they seem to associate Him always with fruits and goals of a lower grade and value than 'salvation'. In this verse, for it is prominently pointed out that Arjuna and brother stamp should worship *Iswara* and dedicate actions for the sake of mental purity alone, and that that is hard they can possibly get. This notion is unsound solved in derogation of 'Iswara's' godhead.

Those who differ from the Sankara school and read these verses to be comprehensive of the sage and the seeker, Sreedhara seems to be one, although he is a member of the same school of thought. I observe that this writer introduces the verse with a note to this effect: 'Having stated how performance of work will be non-binding in effect, Sri Krishna proceeds to show how it will lead also to *emancipation*.' At any rate, Sreedhara does not say that the verse should be restricted to the seeker as distinguished from the sage.

12) युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।

अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबद्ध्यते ॥

युक्तः	...	the Karmayogin
कर्मफलं	...	the fruits of work
त्यक्त्वा	...	abandoning
शान्तिं	...	Peace; Moksha
आप्नोति	...	attains
नैष्ठिकीं	...	ever-lasting
अयुक्तः	...	one who is not a Yogin
कामकारेण	...	by wishful doings
फले	...	to fruits
सक्तः	...	attached
निबद्ध्यते	...	is firmly bound

“The Yogin attains ever-lasting peace, renouncing the fruits of Karma. The non-yogin, being attached to fruits and engaged in wishful work, is firmly bound.”

We have it stated here that the Yogin attains moksha while the non-yogin is firmly stranded in Samsara. The doubt arises at once, whether we have not been told of this before. Revising old lessons, we easily come across verses in which libertation and bondage were held forth as the reward and punishment of the Yogin and the Non-yogin. Why then are these stated over again?

Within the last few verses, the harmonious combination of *Yoga* and *Sanyasa* has been treated of. Verse 6, for instance, pointed out the value and desirableness of the combination. To emphasize this

and to point out that neither of the two would suffice without the other, verse 10, reaffirmed the same point. By way of adding strength, the example of elders was quoted in the last verse. As the subject seems fairly exhausted, the doubt is strong as to what is the fresh feature brought out by the text under notice. Let us note what the commentators have said in answering this query.

Madhusoodana introduces the verse, saying thus:- "Although self-complacency in the performance of work be common, one man is saved by work while another gets into bondage by it. What is the reason for this diversity of fruit?" According to him, the text accounts for the diversity.

It is not clear to me what is meant by the adverbial clause which assumes that *self-complacency* is a common feature in the work of the युक्त and the अयुक्त. Surely, one who deserves Moksha by reason of योग feels no self-complacency whatever. Such a man does not look on himself as the doer. Either he believes, according to Sri Madhwa, that God alone is the true doer and dispenser of everything, or according to the school of Sankaracharya, that all is false, that the soul is no doer at all, and that even in the *vyavahara* plane it is mind and the senses that work and not the Atman. In any view, therefore, the yogin who is qualified for Moksha indulges in no *self-complacency* कर्तृत्वाभिमान.

Then again as to what the verse is supposed to account for, namely diveristy in fruits, this also is hardly new, because, the reader may easily call to memory verses that have spoken of duty contrasted with mercenary work, and pointed the difference in the ends achieved.

According to Utkarsha Deepika, wheras the last foregoing verse spoke of आत्मशुद्धि (mental-purity) as the reward of yoga the text under comment holds up *Moksha* itself as the reward. Having regard to these two different statements in respect to the reward available, the redundancy in question should be solved, according to the said writer.

But it may be observed, *Moksha* is not the reward of *Karmayoga*, except through आत्मशुद्धि (mental purity). If they were two independent rewards or goals, there might be no redundancy. Then again, *Moksha* as the reward of *Karmayoga* (indirectly, of course has been mentioned before, more than once. In fact, verse 39 itself of chapter II where the subject was started, states this clearly in the second line, not to think of other similar verses. In Sri Madhwa's opinion, the text under comment is not redundant for the following reason.

Having spoken, in this context of the value and importance of combining *Yoga* and *Sanyasa* (dispassion), and emphasized the inutility of either by itself the doubt is possible whether one may not abandon *both Yoga and Sanyasa* and adopt a third course. If *Yoga* means action, and *Sanyasa*, renun-

ciation of action, there would be no room for such a doubt, for, no third alternative which is neither work nor renunciation, may be conceivable but the reader will recollect that, from the beginning of the chapter, Sri Madhwa has, for good reasons, taken *Sanyasa to mean not renunciation of action but renunciation of passion*. Thus he has been able to show how *Yoga and Sanyasa* are complements of each other and capable of harmonious co-operation. The doubt being thus possible whether a man may not ignore both, viz., the technical Yoga and Sanyasa advocated here, Sri Krishna answers it in the negative. He means that unless a person passes through the discipline and practice of unselfish work in doing which he renounces passion and dedicates it unto God, he is bound to be in the prison of Samsara.

In the text, "abandonment of *karma-fruit*" means and implies renunciation of passion (Sanyasa). In the second line "attachment to fruit by wishful work" means and implies absence of dispassion (असंन्यास).

Here, in commenting on the import of योग, Sankara commentators have explained it as referring to God. The युक्त is by them explained to mean one who thinks "These actions are for the sake of God, and not for my own ends".

Desikar explains युक्त to mean, "one who disregards every pleasure and turns *soul-ward* (आत्मप्रावण्य). Desikar has so defined युक्त that he does not seem to

insist on युक्त being a doer at all. He may be an absolute recluse, if the description given be accurate. What it is to turn *soul-ward* puzzles me. If आत्मा (soul) means the supreme soul or God, theists can follow the sense. If the Jeeva is the object denoted, in what sense one has to turn to Jeeva it is not easy to say. The Jeeva being the principle of self-consciousness, we are perpetually facing it in a sense.

In the Bhashya of Ramanujacharya, and also in Desikar's commentary, the word आत्मा occurs very often. The vision and knowledge of Atman are spoken of as the goal. But in none of such passages does the word आत्मा appear to stand for God. In Ramanujacharya's Bhashya of the text under comment, the reader may, if he be curious, count the word आत्मा used seven times. In all these places, the word seems used in the sense of Jeeva and not of God.

On another point also, the commentary of Ramanujacharya is not clear to me. 'नैष्टिकीशान्ति' is by almost everyone understood to denote the everlasting Peace of Moksha. Ramanujacharya construes it to mean the permanent happiness of self-realization (आत्मानुभव). But for Desikar's gloss on this, I would feel no difficulty in thinking that what is meant by him also is moksha. But Desikar says that it is not Moksha that is referred to but some lower stage on the path thereto. But what is 'Moksha', if not a self-realization of some sort or other. Sankaras say it is

self-realization in the sense of attaining Unity with Brahman. Madhwa also says that it is *self-realisation* in the sense that material sheaths have vanished away and that the soul experiences the full evolution of its own inherent, self-contained bliss through God's Grace and enjoys it in the Divine essence.

In commenting on the second line of the verse, Ramanujacharya says that the अयुक्त in question becomes bound as a नित्यसंसारिन्. I always took it that this last expression denotes an important creed of Madhwa to the effect, that a section of Jeevas goes neither to Heaven nor Hell but is wedded to eternal samsara. I did not know, nor am I certain even now, that the school of Ramanujacharya shared in such a belief.

But it is needless to pursue this point. Whether the belief as to Natyasamsarins be a sound one or not, it is fairly clear that the Geeta verse with which we are dealing is not speaking of the said section of souls. What it says is that the selfish doer remains bound. This is not the same thing as saying that he can never rise above selfishness and step into the path of salvation. So long as he is selfish he is, of course, in fetters. The other point whether he can ever become unselfish or not, has not arisen at all for notice.

In concluding his note, Ramanujacharya winds up by saying, "Therefore let every one renounce actions *into the senses which are made of Prakriti*, and do

work only for the liberation of his soul". Here is the last puzzle, though not the least. What is meant by 'renouncing actions into the senses'? Poor things, these senses are simply material stuffs. They are unintelligent (जड) in essence, and can cognise nothing. They can't be doers except in the sense that the axe is the doer in wood-cutting. Hence, senses can hardly bear the burden, if the doer dedicates or relegates his doings unto them.

13) सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥

सर्वकर्माणि	...	all actions
मनसा	...	mentally
संन्यस्य	...	renouncing
आस्ते	...	resteth
सुखं	...	happily
वशी	...	of controlled senses
नवद्वारे	...	of nine gates
पुरे	...	in city
देही	...	the Jeeva (dweller in body)
न, एव	...	not at all
कुर्वन्	...	acting
न	...	not
कारयन्	...	causing to act

“The dweller in the body (the Jeeva), being of controlled senses, rests happily in the city of nine gates, having mentally renounced all actions, and neither acting nor causing to act”.

To Arjuna's question at the opening of this chapter, “of Sanyasa and Yoga, which one is better,” the Lord's reply was that Yoga was better. Evidently, this decisive statement does not commend itself to the school of Sankaracharya. They try to twiddle down its value and explain it away. Their explanation is, that the non-sage, the merely ignorant seeker, was asked to choose Yoga as a course better suited to him than Sanyasa. They think that, up to the present verse, Yoga was treated of for the edification and guidance of non-sages and seekers like Arjuna. From the present verse onwards, the Lord treats of Sanyasa, which, according to them, is, truly speaking, the higher and better course. This explanation which belittles the importance of *Yoga* and modifies the distinct, unambiguous, pronouncement of Sri Krishna on the point as only relatively true and not literally, is wrong. There is no justification for not taking Sri Krishna's language literally. Had He meant that Yoga is good only for immature minds, He would have said so.

It has been pointed out, more than once, that Sanyasa in this chapter is not renunciation of action but renunciation of passion. Thus understood, there is no conflict between Yoga and Sanyasa at all. The former means *work dedicated to God* and the statement that it is the better course of the two is therefore literally correct.

Desikar introduces the present verse saying, that, up to the last verse, the Lord said that all actions should be attributed and relegated to the *Senses*, and now He says that they should be allotted to the *Body* of which the senses themselves are parts. The distinction pointed out by Desikar is not well-founded. The body acts only through the senses. If we were told before that the *Atman* is no doer, but the senses alone are doers, there is no need to add the rider that the material Body alone is the doer and not the *Atman*. It is undoubtedly a case of distinction without difference.

Sri Madhwa says that this verse takes up the discussion of *Sanyasa*, Yoga having been treated of at some length. *Sanyasa* is renunciation of passion. Of this, the Lord has given a brief description already (verses 3, 5, etc.). Now, it is taken up again for further elucidation. Two kinds of egotistic self-complacency obtain in the world. That we are free doers is one. That we can cause others to act as we wish them to do, and for our benefit, is another. In throwing further light on the subject of *Sanyasa*, the Lord denies to us power to do and power to cause anything being done. This kind of renunciation results from the fundamental doctrine of Yoga that actions should be dedicated to God, and is closely connected with it. It does not entail indolence or inaction, but only a conviction of the Divine Hand in every action of ours.

Adverting to the language of the verse, one might think at the outset, that a total renunciation of all actions is here laid down. But the important word 'मनसा' (mentally) is not to be overlooked. We are asked

to renounce actions only *by means of the mind*. The mental renunciation adverted to is (1) abandonment of egotism, and (2) dedication unto God. It would be quite superfluous to lay down the qualifying word 'mentally' (मनसा), if total inaction was meant to be advocated. Because of this expression, performance of action in the proper spirit (कर्मयोग) is saved. Otherwise, all the teachings about the obligatoriness of कर्म would stand wiped away at a stroke.

The school of Sankaracharya interpret the verse on the footing of all कर्म (actions, doings) being false. The sage, according to them, realizes this falsity and gives it up. For a discussion of this point, the reader is referred to verse 18, chapter IV.

If one has to realize the unreality of the world and of कर्म too as a part thereof, and this is the *Sanyasa* adverted to in the text, why add that the said relinquishment should be made *by means of the mind* (मनसा) as if it could be done by any other means?

In order to meet this difficulty, some construe मनसा to mean '*by discrimination*'. They say that the Body or the senses being the real functionaries in the performance of work, the sage discriminates them from the Atman, and relegates actions to their true source. This note may be good, but for the interpretation these very commentators give to the word देही. This word, they say, denotes one who discriminates

the body from the Atman and regards the latter to be only a dweller in and separate from the former. Hence, to say the same thing by the word मनसा is superfluous. Moreover, it is radically unsound to hold that the senses are the true doers in all our actions. They are inanimate, and cannot *will, feel, think, and move*, of their own accord. These functions are attributed to the Mind by western psychologists of atheistic or materialistic leanings. But Indian religious philosophy attributes them to the *Atman* who uses the mind as his chief instrument and agent for the purpose.

Accentuating the word सर्वकर्माणि, Sankaracharya and his followers enumerate नित्य, नैमित्तिक, काम्य and प्रतिषिद्ध, karmas as actions that should be given up. It means that the permanent, occasional, wishful, and forbidden rites, ceremonies, duties and actions, are, by the sage in question, entirely dispensed with. This is indeed far too sweeping. It is, however, a pet theory of theirs that the sage has no duties whatsoever.

The verse, according to them, says that the sage of controlled senses rests in happiness. That he is happy, that he *feels happy*, and that he controls the senses, are none of them true and real. These words are merely figurative, they take care to tell us. The Atman is, for example, not capable of feeling happy, but is said to be happiness itself by a sort of courtesy, just as sugarcandy cannot enjoy its own sweetness, but is sweet to the taster.

According to Sri Madhwa, the sentence reads thus :— “The man of controlled senses, having *mentally* renounced all actions, rests happy in the city of nine gates”. Sankaracharya and Ramanujacharya read संन्यस्य with पुरे and the result may be stated thus :— “The man of controlled senses having renounced all actions *unto the city of nine gates*, rests serene”. The difference is that the last rendering commits all actions to the initiative and responsibility of the material body and the senses. The unsoundness of allotting responsibility and work to inert matter has been discussed already.

In the second line, the human body is spoken of as a city of nine gates. The two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils and the mouth, are seven openings in the head. The organs of evacuation furnish two others, the total being nine. In Kathopanishad II-5-1, the Mantra refers to the city of 11 *gates*. It is the same nine, together with the naval and *Brahmarandhra*.

It is not quite easy to see the point in referring to the human body as a city of nine gates and the soul resting happily therein. One set of commentators (the Sankara school) explain the significance observing, that this fortress of 9 gates is well provided with guards, gate-keepers, messengers, servants and ministers, for fulfilling all purposes, and that the Atman may well afford to abdicate his royal functions into the hands of the city fathers and citizens. The

'nine-gated city' is, according to them, an expression of praise. According to Desikar, the allusion to the nine openings is for drawing a picture of contemptuous contrast between the Atman and the body. While the former is limbless, holeless, atomic, and independent, the latter is divisible, holeful, gross and dependent. It may be observed that in Kathopanishad this very city of many gates is said to be under the control of God. If the Geeta verse convey the same line of thought, and there is no reason why it should not, we see the point that the city is not ours, that it is in the control of some one else and that we are mere dwellers therein, bound to pay taxes and submit to bye-laws.

It is also possible that the expression, 'the nine openings' draws attention to the frailty of this leaky frame which, being full of vulnerable holes, is liable to make way for the invasion of foes. The wise man who takes note of this vulnerable city and commits it to the charge of God, rests happy in the serenity of self-control and the mental renunciation of 'I and Mine'.

The text says, 'the Dehin' of controlled senses dwells in the city of nine gates. This provokes the objection that it is not only the sage that dwells in such a city but every animal. To meet this, Sankaracharya says, that whereas the sage realizes the distinction between the body and the soul and knows that he is a mere inmate and dweller, as in a house, the ignorant man thinks "*I am the body*" and does not look on himself as an inmate and dweller.

It is doubtful if the word 'Dehin' is meant to emphasize here the relation between the dweller and the dwelling. Nor is there any word to mark the distinction between the sage and the non-sage *in respect to their knowledge*. It may also be observed that no man, however ignorant and foolish, ever thinks or says, *I am the body*. In all countries and languages, man talks of the body and limbs as being *his*. He says "*my hands, my legs etc.*", and does not say 'I am the hand, I am the limb'. *This is a vital point* of controversy between dualists and Monists. But there is no room here for further discussion. Venkatanatha of the Adwaitic faith admits the non-existence of the saying or notion, "I am the body".

Seeing that the verse speaks of inward renunciation (मनसा, संन्यस्य) which implies external non-renunciation, Neelakanta chalks out an ingenious path of his own in construing the verse. He splits the verse into two distinct parts. The first part, according to him, is a description of the *sage-in-trance*. The second part applies to the *sage-awake*. The first line and part of the second line, except 'देही नैवकुर्वन्नकारयन्' says, that the sage-in-trance abandons all actions *along with the mind, and all the senses and Prana*. In other words, मनसा does not mean *mentally or by means of the mind*, as almost all others say, but must be read with word 'सह' understood, so that the idea is that *Mind* too is renounced. Neelakanta says further that the 'nine-gates' of the city (नवद्वार) are not the nine openings usually understood, but the five organs of knowledge,

Prana the sixth (which implies the five organs of action), (7) reason, (8) self-consciousness, and (9) memory (बुद्धि, अहंकार and चित्त). The sage-in-trance abandons, suppresses and withdraws himself from all actions, and all senses, and the mind also. The same sage, when he wakes up, is called देही, for, then, he is conscious of his body. The verse says, according to Neelakanta, that even in the wakeful state, he 'does not act nor cause to act', for, like a king, he has deposited all burdens with ministers and lives unconcerned with abdicated responsibility.

It is amusing to find the *sage-in-trance* suddenly thrust in here without any warning or notice, in the very midst of Karmayoga. Without any reason, the verse is supposed to comprise two distinct predications.

By a feat of grammatical constructions, मनसा is yoked to the word सह supposed to be understood and the meaning evolved is that 'the mind' too is renounced. If the mind and all its auxiliaries and functions be disowned and disconnected, there is no possibility of the sage even visioning the Brahman.

The 'nine-gates', as understood by Neelakanta, are not openings but functionaries presiding over the various parts of the animate system. But the verse speaks of the nine openings only, referring to the apertures on the outer skin. Organs of action have no obviously appearing apertures. Reason, self-consciousness, and memory (बुद्धि, अहंकार and चित्त) are,

in no sense, apertures. Utkarsha Deepika strongly criticises Neelakanta on both these points (as to (1) मनसा सह and (2) नवद्वार and points out also that the apertures under reference are openings that may be seen even on a corpse.

Someone else (whose name does not appear) has been quoted at length in Utkarsha Deepika. He too speaks of the *mind* and *all the senses* being given up. He does not distribute the verse, as Neelakanta does, between the *sage-in-trance* and the *sage-awake*. He construes all the words so as to apply to Mukta. The word देही he reads as अदेही which is grammatically possible. By देही he takes Linga Sarira. The meaning is, according to him, that the sage becomes a Mukta by the renunciation of Linga Sarira.

A great deal of this is pure fancy. Utkarsha Deepika points out the flaws of this interpretation. It is not necessary to go deeply into it, for, its laboured character is plain on the surface.

On the last clause of the text, नैवकुर्वन्नकारयन्, Sankarananda has a long note, in which he denies action even to God. It is the stock argument repeated ever so often, that Brahman is limbless and all-pervasive, and so, is incapable of movement and activity. Akasa, for instance, is everywhere and cannot therefore vibrate. Brahman is Infinite, and, therefore, cannot possibly move, as motion implies some space where Brahman was not before. Scriptural passages to the

effect that Brahman is the creator of the Universe, that He is the Father and Source of energy, that He causes good men to engage in pious work and bad men to commit sins, and so on, are, none of them, literally true, says Sankarananda. He instances the Sun and Magnet, and describes the analogy. The Sun is said to dispel darkness. But this is not true. Darkness vanishes, of itself, and the Sun is simply present. The magnet is supposed to attract iron. This is not true. The iron-piece moves of its own accord and the magnet is simply there doing nothing and causing nothing. So, Brahman is simply present in unconscious juxtaposition, doing and causing nothing, and the world moves of its own nature. By courtesy, the Vedas speak of Brahman's Fatherhood and Sovereignty. It is to be understood only figuratively. So opines Sankarananda.

We are, by this time, familiar with this kind of theory. Otherwise, one might well feel startled. Believers in the existence of Personal God, do not, of course, admit that God has no limbs. If Akasa, which is *matter*, cannot move because of its fullness, why should God who is *non-matter* be incapable of motion too. Brahman is described in the Upanishads as 'minuter than the most minute and vaster than the vastest'. "He is faster in motion than the fastest thing conceivable although *sitting*, and is incessantly in motion ever lying down recumbent". (आसीनो दूरं ब्रजति शयानो याति सर्वदा). There is no warrant for applying a rule of material physics to the spirit of spirits, the

soul of souls, to One whose greatness and power are inconceivable and inscrutable.

Sankarananda's simile of the magnet and of the Sun, is queer. If darkness can vanish, of itself, why should the sun be incapable of dispelling it? If an iron-piece can move of its own accord, why should the magnet be deemed incapable of bringing that about by its power of attraction? Sankarananda has to admit some virtue in the presence, respectively, of the sun, of the magnet, and of Brahman. This gives away his case. But for some virtue in them, their presence or contact can possess no merit or power. The analogies and the conclusions are patently unsound.

Let us remember that the text under notice is treating of the *Karmayogin*. He is a *doer* primarily, and he does duties with a certain attitude of mind. But the total renouncer is no doer at all. He is no Karmayogin, and hence, is out of court. Sri Krishna carefully guards against possible misapprehension by speaking of *mental* renunciation only. It is the mind that should be purged of egotism. As between the mind and the organs of action, the importance of controlling the former was emphatically pointed out even in chapter III (verse 6 etc.)

If Arjuna was a person not qualified for renunciation (संन्यास), as the school of Sankaracharya holds, there was no object in Sri Krishna descanting on such a theme to one who was not interested in it. For these reasons, the view of Sri Madhwa that the verse is

dealing only with Karmayoga and is laying stress on *dispassion and absence of egotism* as one of its features, deserves to be accepted as the best interpretation of the verse. It is emphatically said in the verse that the karmayogin '*does not act nor causes to act*' (नैवकुर्वन्नकारयन्). If the mind be pure, if the man does not look upon himself as a free agent, and if he firmly attributes all his doings to God who is the true prompter and controller of all, it is quite admissible to speak of the Karmayogin as 'not acting or causing to act'. But the sense is clear that engagement in work is not excluded or prohibited by this.

14) न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥

न	...	no
कर्तृत्वं	...	agency ; doership
न	...	nor
कर्माणि	...	actions
लोकस्य	...	for the world
सृजति	...	creates
प्रभुः	...	the master, Jeeva, or God
न	...	not
कर्मफलसंयोगं	...	the union of action and fruit
स्वभावः	...	God, the self-existent

तु	...	But
प्रवर्तते	...	operates

“The Jeeva causes not others to do, nor does work himself, independently. Nor does he bring about union between action and its fruit : but the self-existent (alone) operates”.

(1) In verse No.8, it was said of the Yogin that he should think, “I do nothing”. But we see people perpetually engaged in work. It will be a delusion for the Yogin to think that he or others do nothing at all. Hence what does this injunction mean?

(2) In verse No.10, we were told to place all our actions in *Brahman*. Surely, we see the world full of life and work. Evidently, Brahman has given away His independence to the world.

These two queries are taken up here of elucidation. The reply to the first is that men do work, but the guiding will is Providence. The reply to the second is that *independence* has never been abdicated by God. God alone has been, and is ever, the only independent cause of all causes.

The word प्रभुः in the verse means ‘*the master*’. It is appropriate to call the Jeeva, *master*, for he is vastly superior to matter, and owns and directs the body within his powers. The same word (प्रभुः) is, of course, thoroughly applicable to God. In Geeta Bhashya, it is taken in the former sense; in Geeta Tatparya, the latter meaning has been adopted.

Taking प्रभुः to mean the Jeeva, the construction is to this effect :— “The Jeeva causes not others to act. For, he possesses no freedom. Nor does the Jeeva create actions for himself, the reason being the same. In respect to himself or others, he cannot bring about the union of action and fruits, for he has no power to command fruits. In all these operations, God (स्वभाव) is the true Dispenser.”

When ‘प्रभुः’ means *God*, the construction is plain. “God does not invest the world with independence in actions or aims, nor in the achievement of results. God alone moves in everything”.

Three words in the verse require to be noted. They are, (i) लोकस्य (ii) प्रभुः and (iii) स्वभावः. Sri Madhwa understands प्रभुः in two senses, *viz.*, (i) the Jeeva and (2) God. ‘स्वभाव’ he interprets as God. By etymology, it means ‘*self-existing*’.

According to Ramanujacharya and Sankaracharya, स्वभाव does not mean God. They hold that the Atman is no *doer*. But who is the true doer? The answer is that स्वभाव is the doer. What is स्वभाव? Ramanujacharya says it is *hoarded instincts* (वासनाः) of beginningless time. Sankaracharya says it is *Avidya* or *Maya*, the mother of matter. Between these two, there is this agreement that the doer is some *non-Atman*, something material and inanimate.

Sri Madhwa combats this position and urges that all action should be traced ultimately to animal volition. He does not credit the inanimate world with powers of will-prompted initiative. In this view, neither instincts nor matter can, at best, be more than tools, instruments, or implements of activity.

Sri Madhwa holds firmly to the doctrine that God alone is the true Willer and Doer. He tolerates nothing lower to have freedom of choice or action. He quotes a clear passage from Mahavaraha Purana in support of his rendering that स्वभाव means the '*self-existent God*'. That runs to this effect :- "The Lord Vishnu is called - 'स्वभाव' because He is non-dependent. God does not part with independence in favour of any one, at any time whatsoever. Being absolutely free, He incurs no sin. Universal Doer as He is, veiled by ignorance, people do not know Him so."

At first sight, it may be thought that, in rendering 'स्वभाव' to mean God, the meaning given is not natural. But it has been so interpreted in the puranic passage just quoted. Sri Madhwa is not, however, alone in deriving this word etymologically. Sankarananda has resorted to the same method in splitting up 'प्रभुः' and 'स्वभाव' into derivative parts, and interpreting the former to mean "One who shines as cosmos" (Brahman) and the latter word to mean "what illumines, or manifests itself as the world (प्रकृति)".

To take स्वभाव literally, is to enthrone the *inherent nature or character of things*, to the level assigned by Sri Madhwa to God. Among all the commentators I have seen, Neelakanta alone adopts this sense unqualifiedly. He says that things get on by their own inherent natural characteristics. When the sun rises, the lotus opens its petals, and the lily shuts its leaves. Similarly, when the Atman shines, men move about and work, while inanimate objects like the pot, are inert. Thus Neelakanta invests *nature* with the attributes we reserve for God.

Neelakanta's brethren do not take स्वभाव so literally. They only relegate activity and work to province of *matter* (प्रकृति), and are anxious to relieve the Atman of any connection with that region.

Desikar sums up in a clear note all that could be urged against the theory of '*instincts*' being the responsible agents of the world. He states it from the objector's stand-point. The objector, he says, may urge that instincts are all inanimate, that they are but qualities of the mental stuff, that if the Atman is essentially pure and free, it could not come under the power of instincts, that, if instincts are inherent, unborn and beginningless, the position virtually is that the Atman is not free but ever under the domination thereof, and that there is no ground for attributing *action* to '*instincts*' rather than to the Atman. To this strongly worded objection, Desikar's reply sounds feeble. He brushes the objector aside by a single remark that on the analogy of the seed

and the tree which act and react on each other as both cause and effect, the vicious circle should be got over.

The position that 'instincts' are free agents being materialistic, I do not quite follow why Ramanujacharya should be anxious to adopt it, rather than the theory of '*Divine doership*'. He believes in a Personal God. He does not deny universal Fatherhood to God. If he did so, as the school of Sankaracharya does in respect to Brahman, it might be intelligible why 'instincts' should be elevated to the position allotted thereto.

Anyhow, it is to the Jeeva that Ramanujacharya denies *action*. He construes 'ஈ' to refer to the *Jeeva*. Desikar points out that as the context has spoken of '*work* being reposed in God,' the non-doer in question can only be the *Jeeva* and not *Iswara*. This, however, does not follow, the *non-doer* being easily rendered into 'independent non-doer'.

In the school of Adwaita, there being no distinction between the Jeeva, Iswara, and Brahman, the question does not arise which one of these three, the word 'ஈ' stands for. Venkatanatha, however, construes the word as particularly referring to Jeevat man – the master of the nine-gated city already alluded to. In his opinion the last verse having enjoined renunciation of action, the doubt arises whether the Jeeva is called on to renounce what is his own or what does not belong to him at all. To meet this doubt,

the present verse, he says, adopts the second of the two positions.

Venkatanatha interprets लोकस्य not in the sense of 'people generally' as it means, but as denoting '*the body*'.

The other members of the Advaitic school proceed on the footing of *Jeeva*, *Iswara*, and *Brahman* being identical. They therefore deny *action* to the *Atman* in general. Brahman is devoid of any attributes. Therefore, action is impossible for Brahman who is limbless and motionless. This is the line of thought, and we know the rest.

Abhinava Guptacharya introduces a variety in presenting the stand-point. He says *Brahman* is actionless, for there is nothing but Brahman anywhere. It is Brahman that appears as the subject and object of action, as well as the process itself of action. He is the *doer*, the *deed*, and the *done*. Hence, when all three are one and the same, it is not admissible to speak of the doer or the deed.

Sri Madhwa examines at some length in Geeta Tatparya, the position that God has no attributes whatsoever. He argues that such a theory turns out no better than Nihilism. Space forbids further discussion here. It is found in Tatwodyota, and other works too, of Sri Madhwa.

Theism seems vitally opposed to the notion that God himself is no *doer* at all. Such a theory is hardly

consistent with postulating the existence of God. Without inconceivable greatness, excellence, supremacy and other attributes, it seems hardly appropriate to think or speak of God.

Sreedhara departs from his brethren and construes the text in his own way. In his opinion, it does not predicate *actionlessness* to the Jeeva, Iswara, or Brahman. He explains himself thus : "It is stated in the scriptures that Iswara causes men to do good deeds or bad ones, and sends them to Heaven or Hell as they deserve. Hence the Jeeva is not a free agent. How can he be called on to renounce actions ? If it be answered that renunciation too is prompted by Iswara, who bestows wisdom, a further objection arises that Iswara is partial. To meet this doubt, the present verse declares that Iswara does not create human acts and omissions by His own caprice, but simply proceeds on the lines of स्वभाव, and metes out rewards and punishments according to the varying deserts of men".

In this exposition, it is refreshing to note that there is a handsome acknowledgement of Iswara's independence and Jeeva's dependence. It is also true, in a sense, that men's deserts form important factors in the Dispensations of Providence. But it is doubtful, however, if the text under comment is meant here to tackle the particular question of Divine Partiality. The context seems to deal with renunciation or dedication of work unto God. To press this point home, viz., that God is the only Free Agent, is highly relevant.

Other side-issues may not, it seems to me, be mingled up with this central point.

To conclude, in Sri Madwa's rendering, प्रभु stands for the Jeeva; alternatively, for God too; स्वभाव means only God. लोकस्य means 'for people'. If it be the idea that Iswara too like the Jeeva or Brahman is without action on the ground that He too is Atman after all, the use of लोकस्य is fatal to this position. For, the text says, "He does not create actions or doership, *for the world.*" लोकस्य. Without this world, the line easily means that God does not act or cause to act. With this word, however, it means that God himself acts and not the world, and that He does not abdicate His own freedom in favour of any one.

15) नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥

न	...	not
आदत्ते	...	incurs
कस्यचित्	...	(1) of any misdeed; or (2) of any one
पापं	...	sin
न च एव	...	nor, at all
सुकृतं	...	merit
विभुः	...	the Great One (Jeeva or God), —

अज्ञानेन	...	by ignorance
आवृतं	...	veiled
ज्ञानं	...	is knowledge
तेन	...	by that
मुह्यन्ति	...	are deluded
जन्तवः	...	creatures

“The great One (the Jeeva) incurs not, of his own choice, the sin of any misdeed, or comes by the merit of any piety. Knowledge is veiled by ignorance. Thereby creatures are in delusion.”

(Alternatively taking विभु to mean God),—

“The great One (God), is not stained by the sin of any one nor is He affected by the merit of any body. By ignorance is the knowledge of God veiled. Thereby creatures are in delusion.”

‘प्रभु’ in the last verse construed in a double sense. It was shown to mean (1) the Jeeva and also (2) God. ‘विभुः’ here conveys the same two meanings.

In respect to the Jeeva, the line means that sin is not incurred nor merit acquired by anybody of *his independent choice*. The Divine Will has always a hand therein.

In respect God, the line means, that, although He is the Universal Doer, He is not affected by sins or merits. Because the Supreme Being is above law,

and is perfect. He is incapable of being stained by any act or omission. People fancy that they are free agents, out of delusion. They see not the hand of God in everything as they ought to, because their vision is veiled off by ignorance.

Ramanujacharya construes विष्णु to mean *the Jeeva*. This word ordinarily denotes one who is everywhere. But here, it denotes the Jeeva who is atomic. As the Jeeva is capable of being anywhere and dwelling in any *Body*, according to the requirements and exigencies of his karma, he is, in this sense, a विष्णु; such is Desikar's explanation.

As to the meaning of the text, it stands thus, according to Ramanujacharya,—“no man can avert the unhappiness of his so-called relation or friends ; nor can he prevent the happiness of his so called foes. He is but transient in any *Body*. Like a wayfarer he stays awhile and shifts his dwelling from place to place and body to body. Kinship and hostility are but incidents of his ephemeral *Body*. The imbedded instincts of past lives drive him to imagine kinships and hostilities. In truth, he has none such, and it follows that he does not make or mar anybody's joys and griefs.”

In this interpretation, emphasis is laid on the aspect that ‘friends’, ‘kinsmen’ and ‘foes’ are but bodily links. But it is not in fact, untrue that every man does make or mar to some extent the joys and griefs of others. It may be that he is short-lived and must

soon shift to other embodiments. But, during the tenure of the particular life, he does influence his environments for joy or grief. How then, can it be said, that he does not? If 'Body' acts as to 'Body', still the Atman's concern therein is that he is the owner thereof, that he carries forward the hoard of instincts (वासनाs) from body to body, which, according to Ramanujacharya, are responsible for joys and griefs.

The second line speaks of ignorance veiling off the truth. What is it that we are not aware of? What is the truth which we ought to know?

According to Sri Madhwa, we do not feel convinced enough that God is *the true Doer*, and do not realize how thoroughly helpless we are, and dependent on Him. Hence we see not that we cannot incur sin or acquire merit पुण्य of *our own free choice*. According to Ramanujacharya, we are ignorant in not distinguishing the Atman from "Instincts" (वासनाs) and attributing kith and kin and consequential joys griefs to the former instead of to the latter.

Sankaracharya and his disciples present the purport of the text in three or four ways. They are:—

(i) Sankaracharya's view is that we know not how *actionless* is the Atman. If we but knew, we would not render worship unto Iswara : because, God, truly speaking, cannot accept any Pooja, or sins or merits. Why then is it said that Pooja should be made, that sacrifices, gifts and other pious acts, should be per-

formed, and that they are accepted by God ? This is a wrong notion. We ought to know better. We ought to see that Atman is *actionless*.

(ii) Madhusoodana, Neelakanta, and Venkatanatha are of opinion, that *Avidya* or *Maya*, the root of Samsara, is the ignorance stated in the text. We know not how *identical we are with Brahman*. If we but knew and realized this *Unity*, there would be no distinctions for us, of the doer, the deed, and the done ; of the enjoyer, the enjoyed, and the enjoyment ; of the knower, the knowledge and the known.

It may be seen that, in this last presentment, the disciples of Sankaracharya are out-heroding Herod himself in their Zeal to see Adwaita set out as abundantly as possible. They seize ज्ञान and अज्ञान with some avidity, and irrespective of the context, interpret the one as *Brahman* and the other as *Maya*. Utkarsha Deepika draws attention to the circumstance that there is no reason to take ज्ञान here to mean the self-luminous Brahman, for, it may very well stand for reason or discrimination ordinarily understood. He adds that, as Sankaracharya has construed it as understood in common parlance, Madhusoodana and others need not go so far as to give it the technical import thereof in *Adwaita*.

(iii) A third course is the one adopted by those who lay stress on the *Mind* as the responsible *prompter* of every act. Their rendering is to this effect : - “चित्

= Atman, कस्य = of the Mind, पापं = sin, सुकृतं = merit, नादत्ते = does not accept, विभुः = being unchangeable."

Accordingly, the line says "The Atman being विभु (incapable of change) disowns sins and merits which in truth belong to the Mind." Utkarsha Deepika rejects this rendering on the ground that fantastic meanings have been forced into several of the words. The reader may see, in particular, the queer interpretation of कस्य to mean '*of the Mind.*'

In their exposition, Sankarananda and other emphatically point out the inutility of engaging in Divine Worship. Numerous passages laying down the value and importance of Bhakti and devotional worship have been quoted by them and brushed aside with the remark that they but quote and doings of the ignorant. They admit that Srutis and Smritis do, no doubt, speak of God as accepting the worship of devotees, but this is not true, as they put it. One feels astonished over this kind of elucidation. It shakes the foundation of religion. It is derogatory to God's godhead and the authoritativeness of all the Vedas and scriptures. But there it is ; they cannot help saying so, for plain speaking and rigid reasoning drives them to that position.

(iv) Sridhara steers clear of the doctrines relating to 'Unity' in this connection. Nor does he lay stress on 'Brahman' being devoid of action as the basis of the text. On the other hand, he fully accepts that Iṣwara is the true doer and points out that He incurs

no sin or stain, because He is Perfect. Without any benefit to derive, God carries on the government of the world. Although He is the Universal Inspirer, the sins of misdeeds and the merits of good acts do not affect Him. He is not to be suspected of *partiality*, because He proceeds strictly on the deserts of men. But we are ignorant of Divine justice and impartiality and wrongly accuse Him.

According to Sridhara then, the lesson we are taught is not Monism, but one conceived on a far lower key. The impartiality of God is the chief point. That He is the Universal Doer and Inspirer is another. It is ignorance of this truth that misleads us.

As observed already, it is somewhat refreshing to observe this tone of interpretation. Sridhara vindicates Divine justice. Passages such as the opening portion of the Bhagavata, Skandha vii, where the समत्व (impartiality) of God is discussed are evidently remembered by him, being a commentator of the Bhagavata, and his leanings are somewhat strong in favour of Bhakti.

Although no exception may be taken, in the abstract, to the reasoning by which he vindicates Divine Justice, the doubt is strong whether the text here is dealing with this particular point. The first line is rendered, with perfect truth, that God is not affected by sins and stains. But there is nothing to show that the 'ignorance' spoken of in the second line is the special non-knowledge of Divine impartiality. The context justifies a broader sense consistently with

the next two verses 16 and 17 ; the 'knowledge' and the 'ignorance' referred to are evidently more comprehensive.

16) ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥

ज्ञानेन	...	By knowledge
तु	...	but
तत्	...	that
अज्ञानम्	...	ignorance ; Nescience
येषां	...	of whom
नाशितं	...	destroyed
आत्मनः	...	relating to God
तेषां	...	of them
आदित्यवत्	...	like the sun
ज्ञानं	...	God-vision
प्रकाशयति	...	shines and discloses
तत्	...	that
परम्	...	the Great

“To them whose ignorance of God is destroyed by Divine knowledge, God-vision shines bright and discloses the Great One, like the Sun.”

It is believed that the soul is *inherently* a knower. 'Inherently' means, apart from the material mind, and

in its own essence. '*Spiritual vision*' as the soul's inherent knowledge may be called, is of two kinds: (1) that which relates to the soul itself and (2) which relates to God. In respect to both, the screens of *Avidya* obstruct the vision. स्वगुणाच्छादिका or जीवाच्छादिका is the name of the *Avidya* that obstructs the former. परमाच्छादिका is the term for the latter screen. These *Avidyas* are of positive stuff (भाव).

The subtle organ, *Mind*, is also susceptible of ignorance and knowledge. Mental ignorance is but absence of knowledge – a mere negative. Mental knowledge (वृत्तिज्ञानं) is what study, close application, and meditation, produce. By the study of Shastras, ignorance gets dispelled. On close application, doubts vanish. By contemplation, God is visioned.

In the light of these distinctions, let us try to understand the text. The last verse stated that the soul's vision was obstructed by the veil of *Avidya*. If so, the veil cannot be thrown off by the soul by the power of its own essence which is, doubt, knowledge. Being under a disability, it is powerless to pull away the veil. If no other agency could bring this about, the result is that the soul should be doomed for ever.

This difficulty is met in the text. It says that *mental* knowledge which results from study dispels ignorance (absence of knowledge – Negative Nescience). From this, God-vision is reached through the next two stages of application (मनन) and medi-

tation (ध्यान). *Spiritual knowledge* being under the veil of Positive Nescience (भावाविद्या) may be unable, of its own power, to throw off the veil. But *mental knowledge* is a different agency, which may, in its own way, bring out the desired result.

Thus we see that the word (ज्ञानम्) in the first line stands for the knowledge born of study. It is परोक्ष in character : (heresay only, not direct perception). The word ज्ञानं in the second line compared to the Sun, is *God-vision* (अपरोक्ष). It is this that discloses God in the manner that the Sun dispels darkness and discloses objects to view.

There can be no doubt that ज्ञानं compared to the Sun is the transcendental vision of God called sometimes "Supra-consciousness", which is discussed at some length in chapter II from verse 54 to the end. May it not be that ज्ञानं in the first line too denotes the same *God-vision* especially because *God-vision* itself is of mental composition when it is born ? अपरोक्ष being मानस. To this, the answer is that ज्ञानं in the first line is परोक्ष (Book-learning). The reason is found in the language of the text. It may be seen that ज्ञानं occurs twice in the verse. If both the words denoted *God-vision*, it was quite superfluous to have used the same word in the second line to denote the same idea. The language show that two different kinds of knowledge are contemplated. (परोक्ष and अपरोक्ष).

Another difficulty has been felt in construing the first line. It speaks of अज्ञान being destroyed नाशित by ज्ञान. I have explained the word ज्ञान to stand for परोक्ष knowledge (of the Mind). The doubt then is what is the अज्ञान which is tackled by ज्ञान and what exactly is denoted by the word नाशित?

There is some difference of opinion as to this between two learned commentators in the school of Sri Madhwa himself.

It may be seen that *ignorance* अज्ञान is admittedly of two kinds : *Positive* and *Negative*. Positive अविद्या (Nescience) falls under two head परमाच्छादिका (what obstructs God-vision), and जीवाच्छादिका what prevents मुक्ति. One commentator thinks that *mental knowledge* weakens परमाच्छादिका and renders it well-nigh powerless. In his view, the अज्ञानं referred to in the text is this *Positive Nescience* परमाच्छादिका. No doubt, this positive stuff cannot *be destroyed*, but is only liable to be moved away by Divine Grace. Hence नाशित in the verse is to be understood in a qualified sense to denote '*weakening*', and not *destruction*. The commentator Sreenivasa Theertha dissents from this opinion and holds that अज्ञानं in the text is not परमाच्छादिका but only ज्ञानाभाव (non-knowledge – Negative Nescience) which book-learning (श्रवण) can effectively dispel.

In this connection, Venkatanatha interposes the criticism that we are wrong in construing अज्ञान here into 'non-knowledge' (Negative Nescience). He and his brethren are somewhat partial to Positive Nescience (भावाविद्या) so much so that they seem hardly to admit "non-knowledge" (अभावरूपाज्ञान) anywhere, except in name. Venkatanatha observes : "Sri Madhwa construes अज्ञान here to mean 'The Negative Nescience'. He is wrong. In Brahma Sutras, Positive Nescience is admitted by him. Why is it repudiated here by him? Evidently, he disowns Positive Nescience (भावाविद्या) just for the pleasure of discomfiting Sankaras, like a man who is prepared to cut off his own nose so that his face may bode ill, as an omen, to his neighbour."

Venkatanatha always indulges in strong language. It always turns out that the stronger his language, the weaker is his reasoning. We do not deny 'Positive Nescience' here or anywhere. Like him, we admit both kinds of (अविद्या). It therefore follows that, in some contexts, one kind, and in others, the other kind, happens to be contemplated. For good reasons, Sreenivasa Theertha thinks that the Negative (अविद्या) is meant here in the text. This need hardly provoke the simile of the 'ominous nose'. As already stated one of the commentators seems to differ from Sreenivasa Theertha himself and construes अज्ञान into परमाच्छादिकाविद्या (which is Positive). Sri Madhwa's Bhashya and Jayatheertha's Tika lend room for both the views.

Ramanujacharya says nothing about the distinction between Positive Nescience and Negative Nescience adverted to above. He construes अज्ञान to mean the load of past *karma* that every Jeeva carries at his back. Gnana dispels this and shines like the sun. Thereby it discloses *all* to the view of the seer. It is able to do so because it is now fully evolved, expanded, and developed, whereas, before, it had lain contracted, narrow and tiny. Now, having become परं (great), it is compared to the Sun.

In this interpretation, it may be seen that अज्ञानं made to mean the past karma, is obviously given a forced sense. Secondly, the Jeevic knowledge is said to exhibit *everything* (सर्वं) to the view of the seer. What this सर्वं means, we are not told. Surely the seer does not become omniscient. Thirdly, परं, properly speaking, ought to mean Brahman or God. On the other hand, Ramanujacharya construes it to mean 'Unlimited'. It is hardly right to call the knowledge acquired by any seer, '*unlimited*'. Fourthly, the transitive verb प्रकाशयति (discovers or discloses to view) requires an object. It is there in the verse itself quite handy, viz., परं (in the sense of Brahman). This word is brushed aside with a forced signification, and the object of the verb is then sought in an imagined ellipsis by the word सर्वं put in.

In my humble opinion, there seem to be some weak points in Ramanujacharya's rendering of this

verse. But Venkatanatha picks out a different point for vehement attack. In the text, it may be noted that येषां तेषां (of *those* who) are words in the plural number. Hence it amounts to saying that seers are many and this leads to the result that souls are many too. Monism cannot tolerate this position. Venkatanatha says that 'Bodies' only are *many*, while the soul is but *one*. So thinking, he regards Ramanujacharya's construction of the plural words to be wrong. He points to the *singular* word आत्मनः in the text with some exultation, and says that the *singular* number should bring tears to the eye of every Dualist (द्वैतिन्).

Madhwas, at any rate, have no reason to shed tears over the word आत्मनः used in the singular : for they it in the sense of Brahman which, according to them, is the Supreme God, *One without a peer*. By taking God to be peerless, as is the true position in Monotheism, we are not driven to admit the non-existence of Jeevas in numberless multiplicity and variety.

The members of the Sankara school feel hard-pressed to account for the plural use of येषां, तेषां.

That the multiplicity of 'Bodies' only is meant, is one explanation of theirs. Another, as stated by Madhusoodana is, that the plural is meant to emphasize the rule that man alone becomes the seer whose अविद्या has been dispelled. For example, if A's

ignorance relates to an object called X, he becomes the knower of it only if *his* ignorance relating to *that* particular object is dispelled, and not if B's ignorance is dispelled or A's ignorance of some other object is removed. Unless ignorance and knowledge relate to the same *subject* and *object*, one cannot expel the other. In order to affirm the universality of this rule, the words येषां — तेषां (of *whomsoever* and *theirs*) are used. Thus opines Madhusoodana. How laboured this is, requires no demonstration. What is said comes to this : "If A studies a subject it bestows learning on *him* and not on B who does not study it." This is so obvious a truism as not to require any teaching, and much less one in the involved manner attributed to Sri Krishna.

On the subject of Positive Nescience, there is a huge literature of controversy in Nyayamrita, Sudha, and other works. Sri Madhwa thinks that the theory of Maya or Avidya as understood by Monism is untenable, because (i) it regards Brahman as void of any attributes, (ii) it does not admit the existence of anything other than Brahman, (iii) it does not admit even अविद्या as a reality, and (4) it is therefore impossible for Monists to say *what* अविद्या is like, *whom* it dominates, *what* it veils off, and *what object* it relates to. As Monists deny the reality of everything but Brahman, and as all proofs too are *ergo* unreal, they cut the ground from under their own feet, so that no amount of reasoning can save their creed. Shortly, this is the Dualist's criticism of माया.

In theory, the distinction is admitted by the Sankara school between *Nescience Negative* and *Nescience Positive*. In practical application, however, they seem to call every kind of ignorance or non-knowledge, *Positive Nescience*. One would have thought that the beginningless *maya* or *Avidya*, which is responsible for the Samsara of everyone, was alone this भावाविद्या (Positive Nescience), while ordinary items of non-knowledge, of which every man carries a legion from his cradle to the grave were merely negative aspects. But Madhusoodana instances the ignorance of a man who knows not the fire on the mountain-top as an item of भावाविद्या dispellable by Inference (i.e., by a kind of proof other than perception). This seems to give away the whole show. If the non-knowledge of the mountain-fire is not an instance of negative Nescience, what else can be that, it is impossible to say. Hence the remark is inevitable that Monists are so partial to Positive Nescience that they virtually repudiate Negative Nescience altogether.

Some eloquence has been devoted to the point that the Seer's knowledge shines resplendent like the Sun. It is pointed out by Madhusoodana that if the Sun appears, darkness disappears, and that no body's grace is necessary as an intermediary between the two. Similarly, अज्ञान disappears on the birth of ज्ञान, so that, no third person need intervene between the two to produce the end wished for. This exposition is intended as an attack of Sri Madhwa's view that Divine Grace is the only means of achieving any

purpose. We believe that, by His Grace, the ignorant becomes the knower, the knower gets to Heaven, and the Mukta in Heaven gets his bliss and happiness. Knowledge cannot and will not dispel ignorance except by the operation of His Grace, and so, can no cause produce its effect without His Will and Pleasure. There is no room for Divine Grace on the platform of Monism; but it is a cardinal article of Sri Madhwa's faith.

17) तद्बुद्ध्यस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।

गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥

तद्बुद्ध्यः	... thinking on that
तदात्मानः	... taking that as all in all
तन्निष्ठाः	... merged in That
तत्परायणाः	... looking to that as the great goal
गच्छन्ति	... they attain
अपुनरावृत्तिं	... non-return (Mukti)
ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः	... their sins dispelled by God-vision

"Thinking on That, taking That as all in all, merged in That, looking to That as the Great Goal, those whose sins have been dispelled by knowledge go to the abode whence there is no return to Samsara."

A careful study of the Shastras dispels ignorance. The last verse declared this and pointed out the transcendental *Vision of God* that follows from it. Between study and God-vision there is however a big gulf to

be bridged over by sustained application (मनन) and contemplation (ध्यान). It is not enough that a conviction of religious truths is obtained by a seeker. It is necessary that the mind vigorously thinks of it over and over again. It is further needful that the mind is able to dwell on God in meditation and be steady, firm and still, like an unshaken flame.

Having spoken of study, and its immediate effect, viz., removal of unbelief, in the last verse, the present one takes up a description of the steady contemplation (ध्यान) that is the immediate cause of God-vision. The concentration that can bring about God-vision should be of sufficient intensity and duration for the purpose. The seeker should ever bend his thoughts to 'That' (God), and should regard God as all in all for him, his master, guide, philosopher, friend and all, *i.e.*, the true Doer, and Inspirer of all his vitality and work. He should be established and merged in God and never swerve from Him. He should look to God and God alone for the Goal.

These four conditions of mental devotion are all aspects of concentration. Whether there be shades of difference among them or not, the object of heaping one epithet on another is to depict a condition of intense thought and devotion.

The second line sets before the seeker at least three results : (i) God-vision is one, (ii) Liberation from sins is another, (iii) Moksha is the third. This last is described by an expressive word which means

‘the stage or abode whence there is no return.’ This is not in the sense meant by Shakespeare when he speaks “of the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns.” For, Shakespeare was no believer in *metempsychosis*, and refers simply to the mystery relating to Death in general. But अपुनरावृत्ति in the text, denotes the *Summum Bonum* of the Indian Seer’s aspirations, the condition of absolute Emancipation which frees the Jeeva from liability to re-birth.

In construing तदात्मानः, the commentators of the Sankara school take occasion to say that ‘the knower’ in question sees his own ‘self’ as identical with Brahman. But Sridhara renders आत्मा here to stand for *the Mind*. According to him, तदात्मानः means those whose minds are devoted to Brahman.

Ingenuity has been displayed by Madhusoodana (whom Venkatanath copies) and Neelakanta, in differentiating between the four epithets used in the first line of the text. Madhusoodana thinks that they signify four different steps, each succeeding one denoting the cause of the preceding step. तद्ब्रह्मः denotes the highest state where Brahman is seen and realised to be One with the Seer. तदात्मानः is the next lower state where deep contemplation prevails. तन्निष्ठाः marks the state below, where the seeker is engaged invigorous study. तत्परायणाः denotes the lowest state of all where

the pious man is only giving up attachments. On the other hand, Neelankanta reverses the order completely. He takes the last mentioned stage (तत्परायणाः) to the top and pulls down the first mentioned to the lowest level. Thus, in his rendering, each of the four epithets signifies something different from what Madhusoodana thinks it does. But the elasticity of the Sanskrit words prevents any linguistic criticism being directed against either view.

Sankaracharya thinks that तन्निष्ठाः implies a total renunciation of actions. This accords with their creed that the aspirant to Mukti need engage in no work or action. But many of the commentators including Sridhara construe the said expression in its literal and natural meaning to denote "those who rest in God, *i.e.*, those who are highly devoted to Him."

In a few words, the difference between Sri Madhwa and the Sankara Writers may be stated thus:— Sri Madhwa thinks that the verse is a lucid description of the meditating seer. Among the steps or causes leading to God-vision, श्रवण (study) and मनन (mental application), are remote ones. ध्यान (meditation) is the proximate cause and step. With this alone are the four epithets of the text concerned. The Sankara Writers, however, think that all the remote as well as the proximate steps and stages have been successively described here, each of the four adjectives standing for one such, separately and distinctly.

18) विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डितास्समदर्शिनः ॥

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने	... possessing learning and humility
ब्राह्मणे	... in the Brahmin
गवि	... in the cow
हस्तिनि	... in the elephant
शुनि	... in the dog
च, एव	... and, as well
श्वपाके	... in the Chandala
च	... and
पण्डिताः	... learned men
समदर्शिनः	... are seers of equal Brahman

“Learned men see *Brahman* equal in all forms, immanent in the Brahmin of learning and humility, as well as in the cow, the elephant, the dog, and the Chandala.”

God pervades great things and small. But He is the same perfect Being everywhere. To say that He is contracted or expanded according to the size of the image He pervades, is to measure Divinity by a material tape and rod. He is beyond this, for, He is greater than the greatest and minuter than the minutest. As in this, so in other particulars also, God is great being possessed of equally perfect and infinite

attributes in all His Forms. That He is in the Brahmin of the highest lore and in the Chandala who is supposed to live on canine flesh makes no difference in the greatness of the Divine Form that animates each. The learned man looks on the Divinity in every creature as similar, so that he is convinced that no dissimilarity, disparity, or grades, exist, at all, to differentiate one Form of God as superior or inferior to another.

According to Sri Madhwa, this is the idea of the text, in speaking of पण्डिताः being “Seers of equality” (समदर्शिनः). This conviction is here insisted on, to show that it is an essential step towards *God-vision* (अपरोक्ष) so largely spoken of. Divine Meditation (ध्यान) is, we were told in the last verse, the proximately preceding cause of *God-vision*. We are now told that an important step for reaching God-vision is to see that God pervades every creature in equal fullness.

In the text, the words पण्डिताः and समदर्शिनः do not signify the sage who has actually visioned God. They both denote the seeker who is yet wending his way to the goal. पण्डित as explained in *Kosha*, means one who is learned in books. समदर्शिनः signifies the seer of Divine Equalities. This naturally denotes the step or condition before the seeker is competent to stand before God face to face and vision Him.

It may be urged in objection that the verse contains no words of express reference to God. It seems

to lay down the equality of the Brahmin, the outcaste, and the animals. But the next verse (see second line) says "It is *Brahman* that is flawless and *equal*, and, therefore, they rest in him." Thus, the equality contemplated relates to *Brahman* and not to His creatures.

Ramanujacharya construes समत्त्व (equality) to signify the similarity of the *Jeevatma-world*. He says, that, although Jeevas who are infinite take Bodies exalted or low, greatness and littleness are the attributes only of Prakriti (matter) and not of the Jeeva. Being composed of *Intelligence* in essence, all Jeevas are equal and similar. This accords with the creed of this particular school which admits no gradation among Jeevas, as Sri Madhwa does.

In the school of Sankaracharya, there is no occasion for the query about the Jeeva and the Brahman, because they are identical.

The first impression that is created by the text is that Sri Krishna is pointing out the Universal equality of all creatures. Interpreters are numerous who look on the text as touching a key-note of sociology and extending it even beyond mankind to the animal kingdom. The Brahmin of learning and humility is at one end, and the Chandala supposed to live on canine flesh is at the other, in the human scale. This covers the entire range of human gradations. The cow is the most sacred of animals. The elephant represents a separate group of its own. It is huge

and massive, rather dull for its size, and carries, with it, associations of royal paraphernalia. The dog is at the lowest end regarded as filthy and untouchable in the eyes of the pious. Sri Krishna, it is said, sweeps aside all these notions of imagined gradations, and exhorts the seeker and expects the sage to look on all creatures alike.

This view of the text is not accepted by the orthodox. Sri Madhwa is unable to get over the stern fact that men and animals differ infinitely from one another not only in shape and size, but in character, conduct, nature, aptitude, capacity and innate fitness. This variety is not alone in the Bodies of men and animals, but is traceable to the souls themselves.

Smriti texts (Gautama and others) condemn strongly, the equal treatment of the great and the low on pain of hell. Unless Sri Krishna meant a révolution of Hindu notions on the subject, He would hardly club the Brahmin and the outcaste together, as also the cow and the dog, as equal. The commenatators who adhere to orthodoxy throw light on the subject and point out, in what sense, all creatures are alike. Sri Madhwa points out that all things are pervaded and animated by the same God. Under His Fatherhood and Providence, we are all brethren deriving sustenance from the common source. Accordingly, there is no cause for mutual hate or disgust except in relation to Him. Whoever hates the Father is our religious alien ; whoever loves Him is our religious brother.

Ramanujacharya accouts for the equality with reference to the common and equal characteristics of the atomic Jeevas presiding in animal Bodies.

The school of Sankaracharya explain the equality on the footing that everything is Brahman and there is nothing else in the universe. Some members of this school, however, sound dissent in a way, and this will be noticed.

Abhinava Guptacharya says that it is undesirable to *treat* the Brahmin and the outcaste alike, as also the cow, the elephant, and the dog. But he adds that the sage ought to regard them *in his mind* as equal. He ought to think thus : "This Brahmin of learning and humility is nothing to me. By serving him, I derive no merit. The cow is not sacred to me. The elephant is no wealth to me. The dog is not impure. The outcaste is not impure or sinful." This annotator says that although the sage should think as aforesaid, he ought not to deal so with them. On what ground, the inconsistency between the thought and the deed is justified, it is hard to see.

As stated before, Sankaras say that all the world is Brahman, and hence all are equal. But one annotator dissents from his brethren and explains his position thus : "the high, the middle and the low, among animals, are mentioned by typical representatives of each group, *viz.*, the cow, the elephant and the dog. Among men, the Brahmin is expressly stated. By the term 'विद्याविनयसंपन्ने' ('the learned'), Kshatriyas

and Vysias are alluded to. By the term विनयसंपन्ने (the humble), the Soodra whose vocation is service and humility, is referred to. The outcaste is adverted to by the word शूपाकः. In these creatures thus graded, Brahman *dwells* immanent. Him, learned men look on, as the in-dweller of, and not as identical with, the creatures”.

The author of Utkarsha Deepika sets out the view of this annotator and attacks it. His objections are (1) that the variety among creatures, as explained above, on the footing of castes etc., is not readable in the words of the text; (2) and that the *pervasion of Brahman* as distinguished from Brahman's identity, is unsound in theory.

On the first of these two points of attack, we may say nothing. It does not affect any vital point of creed.

On the second, it may be seen that the view of the criticized author coincides with that of Sri Madhwa. If Sri Krishna wished to point out the identity of Brahman with the Universe, one would have thought that He need hardly select but five creatures, and these five, of all others, which are associated with notions and incidents of apparent inequality.

It is more sound to say that He admits the inequalities and proceeds to say that Brahman is perfect though dwelling, as He does, *within* those inequalities.

In the opinion of Desikar also, the epithet विद्याविनयसंपन्न (possessed of learning and humility) does not qualify ब्राह्मण, but signifies some one other than ब्राह्मण. He says that by ब्राह्मण. is meant the Brahmin by birth and not by desert. In antithesis to this, is the reference to the man possessed of learning and humility. Thus construed, the verse mentions six objects instead of five and they divide themselves into pairs of unequals, set in antithesis.

19) इहैव तैर्जितस्सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥

इह	... here
एव	... alone
तैः	... by them
जितः	... is overcome
सर्गः	... re-birth, Samsara
येषां	... whose
साम्ये	... in equality
स्थितं	... fixed
मनः	... mind
निर्दोषं	... flawless
हि	... indeed
समं	... equal

ब्रह्म ... Brahman
 तस्मात् ... therefore
 ब्रह्मणि ... in Brahman
 ते ... they
 स्थिताः ... are established

“By them whose minds are fixed in ‘equality’, is Samsara overcome even now. Flawless, indeed, is the equal Brahman. Therefore they are established in Brahman.”

The reward held out to those who see God everywhere in myriads of Forms, all of them being equally Full and Perfect is the conquest of Re-birth. It is added that this conquest happens even in the current life itself.

Thus the predications made are two:— (i) that Mukti is assured for the seer of ‘equality’ and (ii) that, beyond the current life, that is, when he is rid of this body and he dies, he will not be born again. These predications are not to be understood too literally. The conviction of समत्व (equality) was, in the last verse, said to be of value in bringing about *God-vision*. It is a well-established doctrine that *God-vision* is indispensable for Mukti.

Hence, the statement that the conviction of ‘Equality’ leads to Mukti, has to be understood in a modified sense so as not to conflict with other lessons on the same subject. In verse 72, chapter II, we were

taught that, even the seer who has been blessed with God-vision, is liable to take re-births as often as may be necessary for the exhaustion of *Prarabdha Karma*. Hence the statement that the 'believer in equality' (समदर्शी) under reference, conquers Re-birth *in the current life itself*, is not to be accepted too literally.

The truth is that the text is not intended to controvert the old lessons on the subject. In fact, God-vision alone leads to Mukti and even the full-blown sage cannot help *Re-births*, if necessitated by Prarabdha. The text is to be understood harmoniously with these tenets. The intention of the somewhat exaggerated language used in the text is to lay stress on the value and importance of the seeker not attributing inequality or imperfection, to any Form of God. Where eulogy is employed with a clear purpose, overstatements are not uncommon in order to emphasize the main idea. In this view of the verse, Desikar concurs.

Difference of opinion has been pointed already as to who or which should be looked on as सम (equal). Ramanujacharya thinks that Jeevas should be known as 'equal' to one another and to God, in their pristine purity. Sri Madhwa dissents on the ground that Jeevas remain infinitely graded and can never be equal to one another or to God in any respect or aspect. The second line of the verse appeals to me as well-nigh conclusive on this point.

It says "It is Brahman that is सम and flawless, is it not?; and hence they are established in Brahman." If it is Jeevas that are 'equal' in their pure essence, there was no need to drag Brahman in. To speak of Brahman as सम, jars with the teaching that it is the Jeevas that are 'equal'. Seers believing in the 'equality' of Jeevas ought to be spoken of as established in Jeevas and not in Brahman as the verse concludes (ब्रह्मणिस्थिताः).

Desikar sees the difficulty and solves it in a feeble note that the word *Brahman* here (used twice) stands for the *Jeeva in purity of essence*. The reader may see that there was no reason at all for Sri Krishna suddenly using the word ब्रह्म to denote the Jeeva. That it usually signifies the God Supreme in Vedanta Literature, needs no proof.

In the school of Sankaracharya, the creed of 'Equality' is explained on the footing that the seer pays no heed or thought to the difference between the Chandala and the Brahmin, or between the cow and the dog. These varieties are but distinctions of the flesh and are unreal also. They add, that where Smriti texts elaborate distinctions of caste and order and lay down rules of prohibition as to food, marriage, and social intercourse, they should be taken to apply to society as it normally exists and not to the *Seer*.

The 'Seer' is bound by no law. He may dine wherever he pleases. He treats the outcaste and the *Brahmin* quite alike as also the members of the animal

kingdom and the mineral world. That he treats them alike means that his physical and mental vision cognizes nothing but Brahman. This, briefly, is the standpoint of the Advaita annotations.

From Sankaracharya downwards almost every member of the school adverts in this connection to the Gautama's aphorism relating to prohibited dinings and says that the seer is not affected by them.

The reader is requested to read the text once more and follow its language. There is nothing said there about the sage being above all rules in respect to food or any other worldly dealing. There is no word to show that the equality of men and animals is contemplated. There is no word to show that seers are flawless and are themselves Brahman. They are said to be '*in Brahman*' and are not spoken of as metamorphosed into Brahman. Further comment is needless.

20) न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।

स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणिस्थितः ॥

न, प्रहृष्येत्	...	shall not be elated
प्रियं	...	objects of pleasure
प्राप्य	...	obtaining
न उद्विजेत्	...	nor shall grieve
प्राप्य	...	coming by

च	...	and
अप्रियं	...	what is disagreeable
स्थिरबुद्धिः	...	firm in conviction
असम्मूढः	...	undeluded
ब्रह्मवित्	...	the knower of God
ब्रह्मणिस्थितः	...	dwelling in God

“As the knower of Brahman dwells in God, undeluded, and firm in conviction, he shall not be elated, obtaining objects of pleasure ; nor shall he grieve, coming by what is disagreeable.”

In chapter II, from verse 54 up to the end, we had a lucid exposition of what the seer of steady wisdom is like. The present teaching bears some similarity thereto. But the difference is that the previous lesson related to the seer while the present relates chiefly and mainly to the seeker.

This chapter deals with the two ingredients of *Karmayoga*, viz., *Sanyasa* and *Yoga*. Some of the past verses spoke of the one and others of the other. Hereafter, up to the end of the chapter, the thread is continued, mixing up the two themes or treating each separately, as the exigency of the context may require.

In the text, the first line enjoins self-restraint in respect to joys and griefs. Elation over joy and despair over grief is the ordinary attitude of men. Duly analysed, it owes its origin chiefly to egotism in the last resort. Vanity, veiled or open, according

to conditions of varying culture, is at the root of elation and depression. One who believes in a Higher Ruler can scarcely afford to give way to such fits, because his belief in God prevents him effectively from arrogating any achievements to his own credit. This is made clear in the second line. A firm belief, absence of delusion, knowledge of God, and abidance in Him, are set down in that line among his equipments. These epithets have to be understood in relation to the context so that the purport is that the seeker in question is firm in the conviction of God's true Doership, that he is free from the delusion of his own free agency, that he realizes the absolute independence of God, and that he abides in Him by never dismissing Him from his thoughts. Thus understood, we see the relevancy of the epithets as an exposition of '*Sanyasa*' so often adverted to as an ingredient of *Karmayoga*. The epithets are relevant and important as indicating the requisite ways and means for renouncing passions. Ethical dispassion and religious conviction act and react on each other, and both are in perfect harmony with a busy life filled with duties and observances.

Sankaracharya and his followers think that *non-action* is the subject treated of to the end of the chapter. They hold that the hero here is the *Seer* of established wisdom and not the seeker. As the *Seer* is, in their view, above work and duty, he is incapable of experiencing any pleasure or pain, on the ground of the universe being but a single Reality with him in the shape of Brahman.

The four epithets of the second line lend themselves easily to denote this *Brahmic* condition of the Seer.

I venture to think that the language of the first line clogs this view. It says "He shall not rejoice or grieve, coming by objects of pleasure or pain." This implies an amount of self-restraint on his part and an output of effort to subdue joys and griefs. The seer is one who has transcended this limit. He lives quite dead to the sentient world, merged and absorbed in, and unified with, Brahman. If he is not, in fact, elated or depressed, that condition savours more of inanimate unconsciousness than an experience of sensations followed by a wilful conquest thereof. In short, the potential verb प्रहृष्येत् being inapplicable to his condition, offers a difficulty.

Neelakanta and Madhusoodana see the force of this objection and suggest an answer. They say that as the *Seeker* should exert himself in the direction of restraining joys and griefs, the verse is worded so as to apply to the seeker *by implication*. But the verse has been construed by every member of the school to be a description of the sage and not of the seeker. In interpreting the two concluding expressions of the verse ब्रह्मवित् and ब्रह्मणिस्थितः, Neelakanta and Madhusoodana have gone so far as to think that one or the other of the said words refers to the 'sage-in-trance.' This renders matters worse. For, such sage is dead to sensory experience of every kind and much more so, to sensuous joy and grief. But the verse talks

of the person "*Coming by objects of pleasure and pain.*" With the sage-in-trance this is simply out the question.

Ramanujacharya dwells on the importance of the knower clearly distinguishing *the soul* from *the non-soul*. It is not clear whether he understands ब्रह्म in the verse to be God or Jeeva. It is fairly clear that he takes स्थिरबुद्धि and असंमूढ to signify one who sticks fast to the *soul* as quite distinct from the *Body*. स्थिर means 'firm.' Here he takes it to mean the Jeeva, who is, of course, eternal. मोह (delusion) is, according to him, an allusion to the materialist's mistake of taking *Body* for the *Soul*.

It is to be noted that this Teacher is rather jealous of words such as मोह being construed otherwise than in the sense of materialism. Times without number, wherever words अज्ञान or मोह or others of similar import are found, Ramanujacharya narrows its signification and confines it to the delusion of mistaking the *Body* for the *Soul*.

No doubt, the materialist is, by all means, the first person to be refuted by every theistic system. But, to read Geeta in this light *alone* is to give the materialist an undue prominence to the detriment of other lessons of equal, if not greater, importance.

After all, to abide in *God*, and stick fast to *Him* is of far greater value than to adhere to one's own tiny Soul. To the theist, the lesson is valuable if the

epithets of the text are descriptions of the Divine worshipper rather than of the Soul-worshipper. Hence Sri Madhwa prefers to think that the firm believer in God is the Seeker spoken of in the text.

21) बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखं ।

स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते ॥

बाह्यस्पर्शेषु	... to sense-objects kept out
असक्तात्मा	... unattached
विन्दति	... gets
आत्मनि	... in the Jeevic consciousness ; in the Spirit
यत्	... what ; or whereas
सुखं	... happiness
सः	... he
ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा	... of mind devoted to Brahman
सुखं	... happiness
अक्षय्यं	... imperishable
अश्नुते	... enjoys

“Whereas one who is unattached to sense-objects kept out, derives happiness in the Spirit, that same person with his mind devoted to Brahman enjoys imperishable happiness.”

It is intended herein to contrast the ‘Sanyasin’ as we have been understanding that word with the

Yogin. I may remind the reader of the sense in which Sri Madhwa understands those words for good reasons. *Sanyasa* is dispassion and *Yoga* is devotion to God, briefly put.

The statement in verse 2, chapter V, that *Yoga* is superior to *Sanyasa* is being further explained. The text says that mere *Sanyasa* may help to bring about '*happiness-in-the-spirit*' by reason of passions being held at bay ; but devotion (योग) is calculated to bring on Mukti itself, which means happiness imperishable. The contrast is thus drawn between the individual who is merely dispassionate and one who adds Divine worship thereto by pointing to the vast disparity in the fruits available to each.

In the expression बाह्यस्पर्श, the word बाह्य has to be noted. It means '*external*' literally. स्पर्शः means 'contact', denoting 'sense-objects' here. Sound, touch, taste, colour, and smell, are sense-objects external to us. Hence, one might take it that the externality of the objects is mentioned here as a mere statement of fact or for drawing attention to their being *non-spirit* (अनात्मा). Vivriti points out a deeper significance. He says that the sense-objects are spoken of as '*external*' with a view to the desirability of keeping them at bay before dispassion could be secured. It is one of the steps to be taken. 'First keep out the alluring objects : then you conquer likes and dislikes.' Thus, 'बाह्य' is not a mere statement of fact but denotes the conscious effort of the seeker to keep out temptations.

In the first line, '*happiness-in-the-spirit*' is referred to. Two kinds of happiness are generally spoken of in religious literature. What is experienced in trance or deep sleep is said to be '*happiness-in-the-Spirit*', for, all the organs including the mind are then at rest. Contrasted with this, is the pleasure of which the mind is the medium and vehicle.

One who has conquered likes and dislikes is able, by reason of the conquest he has achieved, to get the *Spirit* to open its store of bliss, as it were, and experience its inherent happiness, relieved a bit from the pressure it had lain under. आत्मनि in this line has therefore been translated into '*in-the-spirit*', to distinguish that happiness from pleasures merely mental. It is not admissible to talk of '*spirit-happiness*' as being born. For, it is part and parcel of the Spirit, not distinguishable in essence or composition therefrom. But in common parlance, we do say the soul enjoys happiness, although we should rather say the soul is happiness. In all such cases, Sri Madhwa holds that a principle called by him विशेष brings about the same result as if these things were distinct instead of being identical, as they are. Hence the expression आत्मनिसुखं (*Happiness in the Spirit*) is justified by the theory of विशेष.

It may be seen that '*the happiness-in-the-spirit*' here adverted to is what is evolved from the conquest of passions. It is not the happiness of the deep sleeper that is alluded to. The idea is that whereas the sleeper

may be any man or animal whose physical requirements bring on sleep, the person in question is the man of controlled mind and senses. Sleep is an involuntary state, more or less, and indicates no merit, while self-conquest is a highly meritorious discipline of which very few people indeed can claim the credit. Moreover it is hardly appropriate to set off the sleeper in antithesis to the man of Divine worship adverted to in the second line. The antithesis implies two persons who are both advanced in mental culture but differ from each other only in grade. Hence, instead of the 'sleeper', it seems far more appropriate to take the passionless Sanyasin as the person contemplated in the first line. Neelakanta and Madhusoodana are two of the commentators that construe it with reference to the 'Sleeper'.

In the above exposition it may be seen that आत्मनि has been construed to mean the *Jeevatman*. In the alternative, Sri Madhwa construes it to signify God. Then the contrast is between one who thinks of God occasionally and one who is merged in deep devotion. It is the experience of all sincerely pious men that Divine meditation is a bliss. If, among worldly pursuits and distractions, a man can derive solace and happiness by occasional thoughts of, and prayers to, God, how much more should be the reverie and bliss of a life fixed in Yoga. This is the purport of the alternative interpretation. Sankarananda construes the verse in a manner that closely resembles this. He sums up the purport to be that the first line contemplates the meditator who resorts to some solitude

such as a cave and goes into trance now and then, and that the second line speaks of one who is a *Jeevan Mukta* seeing and being *Brahman* always and for ever.

Some commentators do not allow that different individuals and adverted to in the two lines of the verse. They read the two lines as but a single sentence with a single predication. They do not see that any one is contrasted with any one else. They think that single assertion to be that the Brahmic seer secures imperishable bliss.

In this construction, it is difficult to account for the language of the first line as it stands, especially the part “विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखं” “what happiness he gets in the spirit.” If no contrast were intended, these words would be superfluous. Ramanujacharya adopts a different reading, which possibly avoids this difficulty to some extent. He reads यः for यत् before the word सुखं in the first line.

Professor Rangachariar translates the verse thus, with this reading of यः for यत् — “He whose nature is such as is unattached to external contacts, and who, therefore, finds his pleasure in his own self — (he) has (his) soul devoted to the attainment of the *Brahman* and enjoys ever-lasting happiness.”

This rendering, it may be seen, steers clear of the ‘contrast’ emphasized above. The professor invariably clubs together ‘Self-realization’ and ‘God-realization’ as if they mean the same thing more or less. How they could be synonymous is a puzzle to me.

From the translation quoted, it may be gathered that one who finds pleasure in his own soul has it (the soul) devoted to the attainment of Brahman. But it is one thing to experience the bliss of one's own soul and quite another to be devoted to God. For example, in sleep or swoon, it is conceded by all Indian schools, the happiness of the self is realised. But it is not associated with devotion. The soul is the principle of self-consciousness on which 'I-ness' is based. To connect intensified 'I-ness' with devotion to God contradicts experience.

There is no doubt that the happiness of the soul is a kind of bliss whose exquisite character is beyond words. There is further no doubt that withdrawal from sense-contacts is a most effective means and method of unfolding the lovely blossom of soul-bliss. After conceding all this, it is still incomprehensible how dispassion by itself is tantamount to Divine devotion or God-attainment.

22) ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।

आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥

ये	... whatever
हि	... indeed
संस्पर्शजाः भोगाः...	are sensuous pleasures
दुःखयोनयः	... are sources of pain
एव	... invariably

ते	... they
आद्यन्तवन्तः	... they have an origin and an end
कौन्तेय	... Arjuna
न	... not
तेषु	... in them
रमते	... revels
बुधः	... the wise man

“Whatever pleasures are sensuous in origin, (they) are invariably sources of pain, possessing an origin and an end, O! Arjuna. In them, the wise man revels not.”

The verse is intended to furnish a reason why the pleasures of the senses are not to be longed for and indulged in. The *soul-bliss* is imperishable, while sensuous pleasure is but a bubble. One who seeks these bubbles wastes his time and energy, so that the attainment of ‘soul-bliss’ is, to him, indefinitely delayed. The Lord points out how ephemeral and transient are the pleasures of sense-contact and how they are invariably preceded and succeeded by pain and misery. The wise man does not care to revel in them because of the inward bliss he is striving for and is sure to reach if he is unhampered by the allurements of the flesh.

To illustrate how sensuous contacts seemingly pleasurable for the time being, are associated with pain, the Lord gives one strong reason, namely, that they have an origin and an end. The eager longing, the labour involved, the impediments overcome, the

energy expended, and all the manifold sufferings in the course of the achievement, tell a tale of woe. After all, when the desired end is reached and the ardent seeker hopes to retain and enjoy the pleasure, it disappears, while he is still busy with castles built in the air on its enduring permanence. Like a bubble, he finds that it has burst and vanished. This gives rise to prolonged agonies. After many a tear, he starts a fresh chase. Thus is the lifetime of pleasure-mongers wasted in wild-goose chases, with never a thought bestowed on the inward *soul-bliss* always available to the devoted meditator and worshipper of God.

It may be seen that the painfulness of sense-pleasures arise chiefly from their transiency. This has been pointed out in the verse. There are other reasons too which justify the statement that pleasures are associated with pain.

In the system of Kapila's Sankhya it is shown how pleasure is associated with five distinct groups of pain. (1) In acquiring it, the effort put forth, such as in travel, sea-voyage, public service, etc., one has to suffer more or less. This is the *pain of acquisition* ; (2) once the object is secured, Herculean efforts are made to conserve and keep it. It is treasured up in a safe or kept in a fortress of walls, as the case may be.

The King demands a tax ; fire tries to destroy it ; the thief aims his best effort thereat. If it be grain, the ever-boring rat at least is busy in the direction of mischief. These are sufferings incidental to *con-*

servation. (3) There are, then, difficulties incidental to decay and laws of nature. (4) In the actual enjoyment, the habit gets hardened, the craving is firmly rooted and the pleasure palls. This is incidental to enjoyment while it lasts. (5) Almost every pleasure is associated with somebody else's pain. A right enjoyed by A implies a burden suffered by B. Unless the servant sweats hard, we cannot obtain the luxury we covet. This defect holds good in respect to all the above mentioned stages of acquisition, conservation and enjoyment. Thus, as the Sankhyas put it, material pleasure is beset with misery on every side. Hence is the exhortation not to long for it or revel therein.

The school of Sankaracharya present the lesson from a different stand-point. The dream, the snake-in-the-rope, the silver-in-the-mother-of-pearl, and the mirage, are their favourite examples, and, on them, Madhusoodana builds his position thus : – “The world is unreal ; sense-pleasures are unreal too. Whatever has a beginning and an end is unreal. Gauda-Pada says ‘if a thing *was not* before, and *will not be* hereafter, it does not really exist in the interim too when it is supposed to exist.” So, Sri Krishna says, as sense-pleasures possess an origin and an end, they are unreal. Hence, the sage who takes the world as false avoids them.”

An exposition of this kind makes the lesson of ‘Vairagya’ which the verse obviously contemplates, pointless. If the world is false, it means that not only is sensuous pleasure false but the enjoyer, the objects,

and everything else, is false. There is no point in advising any one to desist from material pleasure on the ground of its being short-lived, if pleasure and all its accessories are false like the mirage. Where is the need to think of 'its short life' to be convinced that one should not hanker after it?

The saying of Gauda Pada on which Madhusoodana relies is far from being sound. 'Whatever did not exist in the past, and will cease to exist in a future time, does not exist even now' is the proposition of Gauda Pada. This means, in other words, that Reality and Eternality go together invariably. This contradicts experience. It simply begs the question whether the world we see is a fact or fiction. That a pot, for example, is created and after a time will cease to be, does not help us to conclude that even during the time it is supposed to exist, it is only a figment of fancy.

Apart from the Universe of Matter being true or untrue, we may confine the text to deal with sense-enjoyments and the grounds for avoiding them. Even according to the Monist, they are real in a subordinate sense. So taking stand on this *Vyavahara* plane, the value of sensuous contacts may be disposed of in that very plane without reference to the Unreality of the Universe relatively to the Absolute. Sri Krishna says that the said enjoyments are short-lived sources of pain and should be avoided. As a point of religious ethics, the lesson has point only if, in this connection, we keep out of sight the Unreality of the Universe.

23) शक्रोतीहैव यस्सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥

शक्रोति	... is able
इह	... here
एव	... alone
यः	... who
सोढुं	... to bear ; control
प्राक्	... before
शरीरविमोक्षणात्	... leaving the Body
कामक्रोधोद्भवं	... born of greed and anger
वेगं	... excitement
सः	... he
युक्तः	... is possessed of Yoga
सः	... he
सुखी	... is happy
नरः	... person

“Whoever is able to control the excitement arising from greed and anger here alone, and before leaving the body, he is the one possessed of Yoga ; and he is a happy person.”

The Lord praises the happy man who is able to withstand passions. Greed and anger are enemies hard to conquer. He who steadies himself into calm-

ness even when greed and anger come into play is a true युक्तः. Yoga is composed of (1) Sanyasa (renunciation of passion) and (2) dedication of work to God. The conquest of greed and anger spoken of in the text is but renunciation of passion. Whoever succeeds in withstanding greed and anger is pretty well established thereby in the possession of an important ingredient in Karmayoga. The Lord eulogizes him as actually possessed of *Yoga*, because he is well on the Path and has made substantial progress therein. In verse 21, chapter V, we were told that non-attachment to external pleasure promotes *soul-bliss*. This point is again emphasized in the text by the victor of greed and anger being called a happy man.

There are two expressions in the text whose signification is not very clear. It is said that the happy man resists greed and anger (1) '*here alone*' (इहैव) and (2) '*before leaving the body*.' 'Here alone' means in the human body. It is obvious that there is no question of any disciplinary course of self-conquest in other worlds than the human. In the lower animals, instincts are not checked, and, much less, are they with a view to spiritual progress. In praising the *Sanyasin*, it is enough, therefore, to point attention to the resistance he offers to greed and passion, and call him a happy man and a Yogin on that ground. It is no part of the merit that he does so (1) *in the human body* and (2) *before leaving it*.

It answer to this, it is to be observed that the verse has to be read as consisting of two distinct

sentences. One is, "whoever resists the perturbation of greed and passion is a happy man and a Yogin." The other is that 'such a discipline is possible (1) *only here* (in the human body) and (2) *at some time before he leaves it*. This second proposition is a mere statement of fact. It is not meant to institute a contrast between the man who practises discipline *in the human body* and him who does it elsewhere. It is meant only to point out the fact that here alone it is possible and not elsewhere. As an independent predication it has its use. Therefore it is not to be read as part of the eulogy adverted to.

According to Sri Madhwa, इहैव refers to *the human body* in which alone reason is sufficiently developed to admit of *pros* and *Cons* being weighed and volition being exerted to resist the onslaught of passions.

Other commentators construe इहैव differently. Sankaracharya and Neelakanta think that इहैव means 'while alive.' If so, it is redundant with reference to the next phrase प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् which means "before leaving the body."

Madhusoodana says इहैव means "*before one has fallen into depravity*." Sridhara says '*at the moment when greed and anger manifest themselves*. Sankarananda says 'If one be eager for salvation *in the current birth itself*, not bearing to wait for another.' Ramanujacharya says '*Here alone*' i.e., when engaged in religious practice as a seeker.

It may be seen that all these commentators construe इह to signify some special point of time, whereas Sri Madhwa construes it as a reference to the human body denoting the whole span of human life. Whereas Sri Madhwa treats the verse as composed of two independent predications, all the others read the verse as a single sentence. In the latter view, it is hard to see the force of इहैव. For instance, in Madhusoodana's explanation, one has to resist passions *before one is lost in depravity*. Where is the need for the qualifying phrase relating to depravity ?

If the depravity is such as to admit of redemption, why is it not open to the man to try and rally? Turning to Sreedhara, we see that he insists on greed and anger being resisted at the psychological moment they show their head. Here again, it is difficult to see the force of the insisting qualification. Ramanujacharya thinks this particular conquest should be achieved while the man is yet in the practising stage. This is meant to exclude the stage when the man has become a seer. But surely, the seer has no need to start with this elementary course over again. That he is a Seer denotes self-conquest achieved long before, for, he would be no seer otherwise.

Sankarananda limits इहैव to denote the ardent longing of one who is in a hurry to finish his preparations for liberation in the current life itself, unwilling to take further re-birth for the purpose. Here too, the point of the qualifying clause is not evident. The discipline of self-conquest is advised, not alone

to the person who is feverishly eager as Sankarananda puts it, but to every one who aspires to Mukti. The Shastras say that self-conquest is not achieved in a day. It may take a large number of human incarnations. Hence, the Lord need hardly limit his advice to that person alone who wishes to close his spiritual preparations in the current life itself. Thus the difficulty is obvious in holding that the discipline in question is to be limited to some special point of time and that, although it may be physically possible at some other time too, the Lord intends to exclude it. Sri madhwa gets over it by splitting the verse into two separate clauses as already explained, unlike all the other commentators.

Adverting to the phrase प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् which means "before leaving the body" the necessity for this is not very clear. If इहैव means '*in the human body*' it is superfluous to add that self-conquest should be secured "before one leaves that body." Sri Madhwa means (although the commentary is not very clear) that it is never too late until the man ceases to live. No doubt, it is never too early to begin the discipline. Nor is it possible to say at any time that one has had too much of it and may cry *halt*. But supposing it is an ill-spent life and repentance comes late, it is no reason why one should not begin it even then. It is better late than never, and there is chance while there is life. To point attention to this aspect, the verse says "before leaving the body" so as to indicate the farthest point of time within which there is the chance of turning a new leaf.

Sreedhara thinks that the spiritual student is advised here not to feel greed and anger and to behave like a corpse. When a man is dead and lies a corpse, his wife touches it and laments. His son sets fire to it. These acts elicit no response from the corpse. The advice is "let the man be equally non-responsive even 'before leaving the body', *i.e.*, during life." Madhusoodana, Venkatanath and Utkarsha Deepika severely criticize Sreedhara in this obviously unsound interpretation. It is unsound, because the corpse is incapable of any feeling whatever, whereas a living person is capable of sensations. The point is that, granted greed and anger, if one should resist their onslaught, he acquires Yoga. A corpse cannot be a Yogin although it has no greed and anger because it is a corpse.

Sankarananda thinks that the phrase in question should be limited to youthful life when alone greed and anger largely prevail. This is hardly accurate as a matter of common experience. These passions are seen to dominate the old as well as the young, notwithstanding a disparity between them in health and strength.

Sankaracharya and others think that the phrase means that the aspirant should practice self-control '*right through* up to the point of death, without ceasing to do so at any moment of his life.' 'Before leaving the body' means according to them, 'every moment of the life-time.'

There is some grammatical objection to this rendering. But apart from this, could not this very idea be derived from the expression इहैव (in the human body alone) ? For, Sankaracharya's rendering of इहैव is 'while alive' and this covers every moment of the lifetime. Hence, it seems but appropriate that, of the two expressions, viz., (i) इहैव and (ii) प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् one should refer to the entire lifetime being devoted to self-control if possible, and the other should point out the desirability of mending at some time or other before death.

Ramanujacharya thinks that the phrase in question is meant to show that all disciplinary practice should be gone through on this side of death while their fruit (eternal bliss) is derivable only after death. For accentuating the contrast, the seeker is told in so many words that he should finish his preparation *before he dies* so that the bliss may be available to him *after death*. This position too seems open to question. The conquest of greed and anger promotes 'Soul-bliss' even during life. This was pointed out in verse 21, first line, just as profound sleep brings it about it is not necessary that the reward of self-control should be found *only in after-life*. The text does not say so. It promises सुख in the second line, but does not say here that it is the bliss imperishable that is meant.

Abhinava Guptacharya says that the phrase in question is intended to show that self-control is of value and efficacy *even if practiced for a moment*. This

writer is a follower of Sankaracharya. But his explanation is just the converse of what the latter adopts and resembles the interpretation of Sri Madhwa.

Except these two expressions, इहैव and प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात्, the other parts of the verse do not present much difficulty. The reader may see that the second line speaks not of greed and anger, but of "*the excitement arising from greed and anger.*" The difference is significant. The mind is hard to govern and control. Greed and anger are not overcome even by the Gods from Rudra downwards. No man can therefore be expected to crush them out. The exhortation in the text calls on the seeker to withstand their velocity. He is asked not to give way to excitement but to retain balance of mind when greed and anger burst forth. It is the hysterical perturbation that is spoken of in the text as the enemy to be checked.

24) योन्तस्सुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथाऽन्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।

स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥

यः	...	He who
अन्तस्सुखः	...	is of innate happiness
अन्तरारामः	...	is of inward pleasure
तथा	...	so
अन्तर्ज्योतिः	...	is of inward light
एव	...	only

यः	...	he who
सः	...	he
योगी	...	Yogin
ब्रह्म	...	Brahman
निर्वाणं	...	of non-material Form
ब्रह्मभूतः	...	fixed in Brahman
अधिगच्छति	...	knows

“He who enjoys happiness only within, whose sportive pleasure lies only within, and whose light remains wholly within likewise, such a person is a Yogin, and, being firm in Brahman, is a true knower of the Brahman who is free from material embodiment.”

This chapter is designated संन्यासयोग. We have had Sanyasa (dispassion) discussed. We have had Yoga also, by which is meant performance of duty with Divine Dedication. These two are the ingredients of Karmayoga. The reward thereof is Divine knowledge or God-vision. Of this last, there has been a considerable description at the end of chapter II. But it is intimately connected with the subject-matter of the present chapter. Hence the Lord refers to it again in a few verses.

‘Nirvana’ is a favourite expression in Budhistic literature. It there denotes annihilation. That system evidently regards nihilism as the goal. The school of Adwaita is also fond of this word. They dwell on

the significance of the word as denoting 'peace' or 'quiescence.' If Root-ignorance vanishes, the seer realizes His own self. The result is not bliss or *happiness* but Brahmic Unity. This is an indescribable state in which all *name* and *form* has vanished. There is, in it, no individuality, no quality, no attribute, no experience or sentiency, and no pleasure or pain. It is virtually a state of negation. This is Nirvana, the goal. The text is interpreted by the commentators of this school to say that the reward and goal of the seer is *Nirvana*.

Sri Madhwa understands 'Nirvana' in the verse to be an adjective qualifying 'Brahman'. *Nirvana*, according to him, is neither bliss nor peace, but is a description of Brahman. If the seer be a knower at all, he must see that God is quite unlike the Jeeva. The dissimilarity exists pointedly in this respect among others, that God is above embodiment, while we are its victims. It is one of the Seer's first lessons that he realizes fully this aspect of God-head.

ब्रह्मभूतः is another epithet applied here to the seer. It is capable of two meanings :- (i) It may signify the sage who is firmly established in Brahman, ever relying on Him and devoted to Him ; or (ii) it may mean one who is Brahman. The latter is the sense which Monists adopt. The former is the one adopted by Sri Madhwa.

Much erudition has been spent by Madhusoodana and others in showing how one who is, and has always been, Brahman *becomes* Brahman through knowl-

edge. But this is an old point, and does not require extensive notice. It is the fundamental creed of the school that Jeeva and Brahman are one and the same, and yet, by some inscrutable process, the former *becomes* the latter, some day.

In the first line there are three adjectives describing the seer. (i) His happiness lies within himself, (ii) His sports are within and (iii) His Light is within. It is necessary to see the full significance of these statements.

In verse 21 we were taught that when senses are withdrawn from contacts, the *soul-bliss* remaining inherent and dormant has a chance to become manifest. It is the same idea here referred to, in speaking of the Seer's happiness being self-contained. The allusion is to the self-evolved *soul-bliss* that manifests itself on the senses ceasing to dominate us.

The second proposition speaks of the seer's sportive pleasure being wholly within. आराम is a term that suggests flower-gardens, baths, sports, playgrounds, and scenes of excitement for promoting pleasure. It denotes every kind of felicity that a man may derive from sight-seeing, from entertainments, conversation and kindred amusements. The seer shuts himself up within the closed precincts of his inner self and sports with God. He, visions Him, talks to Him and plays about with Him. Like Prahlada, he laughs, rejoices, or weeps, in ecstasy. God is to him the source of every pleasure that human art can devise in the external world and of what is infinitely more.

The third statement relates to the Light within the Seer. If anything deserves to be known as Light, it is God, the Self-luminous Being. The Seer stands before the Light. No doubt, there is not a thing in the Universe, in which this Light shines not. But our inward eye is blind to the light while the seer's eye visions it in its exquisite splendour. That is the difference between us and the seer, and it is a difference of the most vital importance.

The particle एव (alone) in the first line is significant. It means that the seer is no seer unless and until he is so fully and wholly absorbed in God as to be quite impervious to the world of external sentiency. Not only should he enjoy the Light within, but he should be utterly callous and dead to other lights and objects. The sage of God-vision is undoubtedly in this condition when he plunges into the trance of meditation. Even when he is awake and moves about, his thoughts are bent inwards and suffer little from worldly distractions.

25) लभन्ते ब्रह्म निर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

लभन्ते	... Attain the knowledge of
ब्रह्म	... Brahman
निर्वाणं	... of non-material Form
ऋषयः	... Seers

क्षीणकल्मषाः	... of weakened sin
छिन्नद्वैधायतात्मनः	... possessing the vast knowledge that cuts away doubt and delusion or in the alternative,
छिन्नद्वैधाः	... of doubt and delusion cut down
यतात्मानः	... possessed of self-control
सर्वभूतहिते	... in the good of all Beings
रताः	... ardently engaged

“Seers have their sins enfeebled and secure the vast knowledge whose effect is to cut down doubt and delusion. Then they are ardent in the good of all Beings on becoming knowers of the *Brahman* who has no material Body.”

Verses 24, 25 and 26 are intended to be descriptive of the Seer. The last verse lucidly explained to us how thoroughly the seer is absorbed in introspective happiness. As he stays in *Brahman* completely, he derives bliss from that perpetual fountain of exquisite happiness. The present verse adds that the attainment of Divine knowledge results also from *sinlessness*. A pious and pure life in which sin does not enter is well calculated to clear the mental vision. Duty well done in the true spirit of unselfishness, cleanses the mind of all impurity. In such a life alone is it possible for the seeker to broaden the outlook of mental vision and acquire extensive knowledge.

The word ऋषयः in the verse is not technical. A class of Jeeva is known as ‘Rishis’. They are super-

human, ranking between Devas and Men. It is not meant here to speak only of them. The word is used in the literal sense of '*knowers*,' wise men in general.

Their first step in the course is to enfeeble their sins by leading a pure and pious life.

Their next step is to become आयतात्मानः आयत means 'broad'; आत्मानः means 'minds.' The reward of a sinless life is a broad-minded disposition.

The mind is broad when sympathies are liberal and knowledge is extensive. Study, cogitation and concentration, *fill* the mind with knowledge, so that the ardent, sinless, student of the Vedas and the Shastras knows almost everything that ought to be known.

The next step is, indeed, one of high value. Doubt and delusion vanish from the mind, two powerful enemies of spiritual progress. When a thing seems other than what it truly is, it is said to be द्वैध.

There are always two limbs or alternatives in a 'doubt.' Delusion implies a real state and a false cognition. So long as our life is sinful and our knowledge poor, a veritable army of doubts and delusions batters us. We are utterly unable to steady our faith and reason, and rest in God. When this condition is well-nigh transcended, the seeker may congratulate himself on being next door to God-vision. It should be noted that an absolute condition of "doubtlessness" is, however, attained by and after God-vision alone.

With knowledge properly acquired and duly perfected so as to expel *doubt and delusion* as completely as possible, seekers get to the next stage spoken of in the verse as लभन्ते ब्रह्म निर्वाणं which means that they "vision the Brahman of *no Body*". From Brahman whom they had so far mistaken to be Formful in the shape of images, idols, or flesh and blood, they soar to the true Brahman that is beyond all material embodiment.

It is gratifying to think of the God-visioned seer and his pursuits. The verse very briefly sums up his occupation by saying that he is "ardently engaged in the good of all". A loftier conception of the sage's work is impossible than this, that, though he has reached the goal, he still condescends, with no thoughts of gain and no ends in view, to serve his fellow-beings in the world. He is a seer not only because he sees, but also because he serves.

The truth is that, being above everything sordid and worldly, he has risen above likes and dislikes, above passion and prejudice, and above every impulse that inflames the warring propensities of men. From the serene throne of God-vision, he looks on the world, calm and loving, and recognizes all Beings as his brethren and friends. For, the Father he loves is the father of them all. He has no kinsmen and no friends except those who trust in God. He has no enemies but those who hate God. He feels that, personally and selfishly, he has no enemies or kinsmen. On this is built the ethical code so loudly proclaimed in the

Christian and other systems that Universal love and brotherhood ought to be the ruling principle of a pious life. 'Do unto others as you would be done by' ; 'Love your enemies' ; 'Do not do to any one what you would not like done to you' ; and scores of other golden rules of moral and religious conduct are but feeble echoes of the noble ideal set out in the Geeta and the Mahabharata.

In this connection, a few verses from Santi Parva of the Mahabharata have been quoted in the Sanskrit Exposition.

This is one aspect drawn attention to in the word सर्वभूतहितेताः. The words may also mean "they are persons who rejoice in *God* who is the Benefactor of all Beings." By this, we are called upon to look to God as the 'Universal Friend'. We are apt to think of God as a Mighty and Matchless Being, as a grim and relentless Judge, and so on. But His merciful sympathy, love and benefaction, is something very agreeable to mark and adore. The seer focuses all his love on the *Universal Benefactor*. It follows, therefore, that his own disposition and work are marked by peace and goodwill unto men.

In the interpretation of the various words in this verse, there is no controversy of note between the commentators. All the words are fairly clear and simple. But द्वैध in the second line has been the subject of some controversy. It means, literally, "*division or difference*". The members of the Monistic school natu-

rally take the word to inculcate Oneness as they understand it. According to them, the seer banishes all doubts on the subject of *all things being but One*. Ramanujacharya avoids the meaning of "Doubt" altogether, and construes द्वैध to mean the pairs of opposites such as 'love and hate', 'heat and cold' &c., which the sage is said, elsewhere, to endure with fortitude. Sri Madhwa takes द्वैध to mean 'doubt' as well as 'delusion'. As to what are the doubts and the delusions that the seer banishes, Monism draws upon its own tenets and beliefs by way of explanation, while Dualism indents on its own principles for the purpose.

26) कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसां ।
अभितो ब्रह्म निर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां	... of banished desire and anger
यतीनां	... strivers
• यतचेतसां	... of controlled mind
अभितः	... always and everywhere
ब्रह्म	... Brahman
निर्वाणं	... The Formless (of no material Body)
वर्तते	... exists
विदितात्मनां	... to sages who have known Brahman

“Having striven and controlled the mind, and having banished desire and anger, the sages who have known Brahman have Brahman the Formless with them always and everywhere”.

Here we have a further description of the Seer. We are told that inward joy characterises his individuality. We are now told that the seer has *Brahman* by his side, always and everywhere. He can call up the ‘vision’ at any time or place. Brahman is accessible to him irrespective of time and place. God is with him not only as the object of his sight and the source of his joy but also as his Protector. It is the pledge of God that He undertakes the protection of those who rely on Him absolutely as the be-all and end-all of life. To Hanuman, the figure of Rama, it is said; stood always before him, at his sides, and at his back, whithersoever he went, and whatever he was doing. To non-seers, God is not the all-absorbing object that He is to sages. The verse touches on this aspect and uses it as a distinguishing feature of the Seer.

Ramanujacharya reads विजितात्मनां in the place of विदितात्मनां Desikar explains his master’s view by pointing out that this verse quotes briefly the contents of 6 previous verses from No. 20 onwards and winds up, saying, that ‘to the man who is so qualified, Brahman is easily available’. In this connection, he says that विजितात्मनां (“of conquered mind”) alone is appropriate to the context as it will be a brief re-

capitulation of verse No. 22, just as other expressions in the verse are of other points set out in other verses. The conclusion he lays down is that the reading विदितात्मनां is due to ignorance and to the Editor's inability to explain away apparent redundancies.

In Vivriti and all the editions of Sankara Writers, the reading is विदितात्मनां. They understand the context to be a description of the seer. Hence the said reading is perfectly appropriate from their own stand-point.

In Ramanujacharya's reading, the redundancy between विजितात्मनां and यतचेतसां in the same verse is obvious.

Moreover; it is not compulsory that the word विजितात्मनां alone should serve to recapitulate verse No. 22. That purpose may be served by any of the other epithets in this verse, such, for example, as यतचेतसां. Hence there is no real difficulty in accepting the reading विदितात्मनां.

There is divergence on two points between Vivriti and Sankaracharya, *viz.*, (1) The verse uses the word यतीनां which is construed by Sankaracharya to signify *Sanyasins*. There seems no ground to think that Seers should be necessarily members of the Fourth Order. Hence Vivriti and Ramanujacharya take the word in the literal sense —“Those who strive for spiritual advancement”.

(2) Sankaracharya thinks that the doubt answered by this verse is whether the seer gets Mukti *during life itself* or can get it *only after death*. In his view, the verse answers the doubt by declaring that Mukti is reached *before* death and *after* death too. For this purpose, he renders अभितः to mean 'at both stages'. i.e., before and after death. ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं is, according to him, "Emancipation".

This rendering is far from clear. Its cogency is also open to doubt.

(a) The context lends no room for such a doubt as has been formulated. Nothing said so far was calculated to create a confusion whether the seer does or does not become an 'Emancipate' while still retaining the mortal body.

(b) In the school of Adwaita, to be a sage of self-realization is the same thing as reaching "Emancipation". Hence विदितात्मा is a *Jeevan-Mukta*. Where then is the need to say that *Jeevan-Mukta* is a *Mukta while he is alive*? It is a verbal truism to say so, like saying "what is, is". Then again, Mukti of both kinds—the one before death and the one after death) is said to exist for the Seer (वर्तते). The appropriateness of this verb is open to exception. "Mukti *after* death" (विदेहकैवल्य), can hardly be said to exist for him *now* and *while he is alive*. It is something attained in future. How then does the text use the present tense? In what way does it exist?

Madhusoodana attempts feeble reply. He says that as Mukti is not something achieved or achievable, but is *constant and eternal*, it is said to “exist” (वर्तते). This explanation is far from being illuminating. If Mukti is no other than the *Jeevatman*, it is no doubt eternal. But this is nothing peculiar to the seer. All Jeevas are eternal whether in bondage or in liberation.

Liberation as a state or condition has to be secured by study and God-vision. To speak of this ‘condition’ as everlasting is simply to confuse things and make matters obscure.

Hence, Sri Madhwa renders the second line thus:—
“Brahman of no material Body, is available to the seer *always and everywhere*”. There is no question here about Mukti being derived *at present or in future*, before death or after it. The point urged is that the Seer is such a favoured being as to have God ever within his reach as his constant Guide, Protector and Friend.

27) स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥

स्पर्शान्	... Sense-objects (sound, etc.)
कृत्वा	... rendering
बहिः	... outside

बाह्यान्	... external
चक्षुः	... the eyes
च, एव	... and only
अन्तरे	... between
भ्रुवोः	... the eye-brows
प्राणापानौ	... the out-going and incoming breaths
समौ	... equal
कृत्वा	... making
नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ	... moving within the nostrils

“Keeping the external sense-objects outside, fixing the gaze between the eye-browe alone, and balancing the out-going and incoming breaths moving within the nostrils”.

In the next chapter, the subject of meditation is going to be discussed at some length. *Yoga* was lightly referred to in verse 21 of the present chapter. Meditation is a very important part of yoga. The *Yoga Shashtra* of Patanjali has dealt with the theme in a masterly way as a mental science. The same is found treated of in parts of the *Mahabharata* and the *Geeta* with special application to *Vedanta*. The ideas chalked out are not the same although some similarities are obvious.

Under this verse, Neelakanta has most elaborately borrowed from the technique of Patanjali. He explains and justifies the various expressions of this

and the next verse as minute allusions to that system.

There are three points in the verse, *viz.*, (1) that the sense-objects should be kept at bay; (2) that postures should be practised for yogic meditation, one of the prominent practises being to fix the gaze between the eye-brows; and (3) that the breaths should be balanced.

(1) Sense-objects are kept at bay by strong self-control. Renunciation of desire is the only effective method of achieving success in this direction. Of this, much has been said already.

The verse speaks of sense-objects being *external*. Literally, the words are, "Keeping the *external* sense-objects outside". Sense-objects are, of course, all of them *external*. What then is meant by calling them *external*? The idea seem to be that they enter *into* our minds, as it were, and work havoc with the aid of our passions. Though *external*, they seem to penetrate within us, and bring about internal commotion. The exhortation is to the effect that these foreign bodies should be rigorously kept outside and barred every chance of ingress. Their being *external* furnishes a good ground for the hope that they can, with due effort, be kept at bay. Had they been part of our inward nature, there could be no hope of banishing them at all. To touch on this aspect, they are referred to here as being *external*.

(2) Fixing the eyes between the eye-brows is an indispensable attitude of the young *Yogic* practitioner.

Otherwise he will find it hard to start. A due seat, erect posture, head, chest, and waist, properly thrown up, and other needful attitudes are also contemplated. The gaze fixed between the eye-brows is selected for mention as it is the most prominent of the external preparations. It means half-closed eyes seeing no objects beyond the gap of the eye-brows.

There is no magic in eye-brows themselves or the gap thereof. It is the withdrawal of the eye from the four quarters of the compass and from every possible object of sight, that constitutes the discipline. There seems to be some significance in keeping the eyes half open and fixed between the eye-brows. To keep them wholly closed would induce sleep. To keep them wide open would bring on diversion.

In verse 13 of chapter VI, the advice given is *to look fixedly at the point of the nose*. The advice in the text is not materially different. Both are recommended by books on the subject.

(3) Chapter IV, verse 29, adverted to the practice of controlling and balancing breaths. Deep meditation is possible only in a state of suspended animation. If the body should be engaged in all the normal functions of life, the mind is necessarily diverted into activities for providing the system with the necessities required and the luxuries desired. Hence is the advice to keep the senses at bay, to practise and steady postures, and stop breaths. *Kumbhaka* is the name given to the practice of *retention*.

The text says, "make the in-coming and out-going breaths balanced and still". Speaking of the breaths, it adds the qualifying phrase "*moving within the nostrils*". It is not easy to see the object of this qualification. Of course, all breaths move within the nostrils. Hence it seems at first sight hardly of use to describe the breaths as 'moving in the nostrils'.

Sreedhara points out that this statement is meant to show that the out-going breath should not be passed beyond the nostrils and the in-coming breath too should be similarly confined. The nostrils should serve as the meeting place of the two currents, and there, they should be held in check, not being allowed to proceed any further inwards or outwards as the case may be.

Abhinava guptacharya who is ever fond of unearthing esoteric meanings, seizes the words 'Eye, Eye-brows, Breaths, and Nose' in the verse and reads strange meanings into them. He takes the 'eye' to stand for *all the senses*, the 'eye-brows' to mean *likes and dislikes*, the *two breaths*, to stand for *good and evil*, (Dharma and Adharma), and the *nose*, to signify *the mind*. In the result, the verse reads thus, according to this rendering, "Keeping the external sense-objects at bay, holding the senses midway between likes and dislikes, and keeping the mind clear of good and evil".

If this Guptacharya were a Madhwa, it would be interesting to witness the onslaught that Venkatanath would make on him for these tortures

of the text. Apart from the tortures, I fail to see any force or significance in the unusual rendering adopted. To say that this verse and the next one briefly foreshadow the *Yoga* discipline going to be largely taught in chapter VI is highly appropriate. For, chapter V is coming to a close, and, before closing it, it is but right to show the link between the old and the new chapters. Hence, 'Deep meditation' is the subject that ought to be briefly adverted to. Instead of that, to talk insipidly of 'good and evil' being brushed aside by mental indifference is hardly appropriate here. Moreover, it is not a sound proposition to say that the seeker should discard both *good and evil*. That, however, seems to be the creed of Adwaita and there is no need to go into details here. According to Sri Madhwa, Dharma is never to be abandoned or neglected, although the seeker might eschew such पुण्य as may fetter him by means of *Swarga* and the like.

28) यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।

विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यस्सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिः ... with senses, mind, and reason
controlled

मुनिः ... the sage

मोक्षपरायणः ... aiming at liberation

विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधः ... free from desire, fear, and
anger

यः	... who
सदा	... always
मुक्तः	... is a liberated person
एव	... surely
सः	... he

“Whichever sage has *Sense, Mind and Reason*, controlled, aims at liberation and is free from desire, fear and anger, is surely a liberated person always”.

This verse is connected with the last one. Both deal with *Dhyanayoga*.

The importance of every pious man engaging in meditation cannot be overrated. To withdraw the mind from the world and focus thought and attention on God is a great duty. To fix the gaze between the eye-brows produces the nerve-tension necessary for inducing trance. It is a kind of self-hypnotisation whose causes and effects are set out at great length in the *Yoga Sastra*. *Dhyanayoga* is said to be the same as *Rajayoga* and consists of eight limbs, *viz.*, यम, नियम, आसन, प्राणायाम, प्रत्याहार, धारणा, ध्यान, समाधयः.

It is not, therefore, merely a physiological exercise, as the word 'hypnotisation' may lead us to think. A pure mind bereft of greed and passion is the first requisite. A well-ordered life governed by rules of propriety, rectitude and religion, is indispensable. Breaths should be well under control. The mind, in all its aspects of volition, feeling and intellect, should

be a willing slave. Such a person ought to shut himself within himself and think. Last not least, he should focus attention and intellection on God. It is not a blank mind that constitutes Samadhi but one filled with the Divine Presence.

The text speaks of the 'Senses, Mind and Reason' being in check. We are reminded of the Upanishadic passage wherein the senses are compared to horses, the *mind* to the reins, and *reason* to the chariot-driver, all under the guidance of the owner. If the owner keeps the driver, reins and horses, well under his control, he is competent to undertake a safe journey to the goal and not otherwise.

The text says he should be a मुनिः, whereby is meant one who has trained himself to introspection.

There should be an aim which the sage ought to pursue. That aim should be 'soul-liberation'. The Ashtanga yogin, it is said in the Yoga Shastra, derives superhuman or extraordinary physical powers, Siddhis, as they are called. But these too are but temporal ends.

The temptation will be strong for the yogin to aim at and secure such occult powers. But then, it will only be a case of greed and passion in another form, although the object thereof may not be the usually desired things of the world such as money. The text, therefore, insists that one aim alone should rule the seeker and that should be *soul-liberation*. The test of greedless dispassion lies in the total absence

of desire, fear, and anger. The sage's strength and greatness consist in these traits. He wants nothing, and therefore fears none. Disaster is nothing to him as hate is absent from his nature. One who goes into Samadhi cannot afford to desire, fear or hate. If he retires into a cave and wants some favourite comfort or luxury there, his life will not be endurable in the cave. If he be in dread of the tiger or the serpent, no amount of eyes fixed between the eye-brows will bring on the trance. If he hates other people, or feels angry even with the irritating fly or ant, trance will be out of the question.

It may be noted that, in speaking of the sage of stable wisdom in chapter II and elsewhere, the sage was defined to be one who has subdued *Desire* and its wicked allies. The same point is repeated here and with a purpose. In dealing with ध्यानयोग, the psychological relation of trance to these conditions of mental purity has to be pointedly drawn attention to. Hence is the reference to what may otherwise be deemed redundant.

The verse ends with the words "He is ever a liberated person". The idea is that the man is sure of the goal. Obviously, it is not to be taken too literally, the man being still alive. On the Earth, with the demands of human life claiming and obtaining some attention from him, *Vaikunta* is not yet an *accomplished fact* for him, although he is sure of reaching it in due course. '*He is liberated*' is a not uncommon over-statement or exaggeration which is meant for

emphasis. 'He is as good as liberated' is the idea, and he, moreover, strongly resembles Muktas, being free from passions and prejudices like them.

The term *always* (सदा मुक्तः) has received a special construction at the hands of Sankaracharya. He divides Muktas into two groups. (1) Those who are *free* even with their bodies and (2) those who are such after death. According to him "always" (सदा) is intended to point out that the seer of Adwaita is a Mukta even here, as there is no need for him to give up the mortal body in order to reach emancipation.

Dualists believing in Vaikunta and a condition of Freedom *to be attained at some future time*, cannot assent to this signification of 'always'. In the first line of the verse, the Lord describes the sage as मोक्षपरायणः. It means that his *aim* is *Moksha*. This is not reconcilable with the notion of his being '*always*' in a *liberated* state. Reconciling the two expressions, it is fairly clear that the sage is said to be 'liberated' because he is next door to that great goal.

29) भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वभूतमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥

भोक्तारं	...	the Enjoyer
यज्ञतपसां	...	of sacrifices and penances
सर्वभूतमहेश्वरं	...	the great Ruler of all the worlds

सुहृदं	... the Friend
सर्वभूतानां	... of all Beings
ज्ञात्वा	... knowing
मां	... Me
शान्तिं	... the source of salvation
ऋच्छति	... visions

“He knows Me the Enjoyer of Sacrifices and Penances, the great Ruler of all the worlds, the Friend of all Beings and the bestower of salvation, and then vision Me”.

The knowledge of God leads to His *vision*, that is, the Supreme state of bliss in which the devotee stands, in some inscrutable way, face to face with God Revealed. What kind of God is it that should be known before this *communion* is possible? Four epithets are used in the text in delineation of God's greatness. (1) God is said to be the enjoyer of all *Yagnas* and all *Penances*. *Yagna* is understood, of course, in a very comprehensive manner.

We have had the point well threshed out in verses 25 to 30 of chapter IV in which, *Yagna* was held to embrace every kind of mental, vocal, and manual task, undertaken to promote the good of others and dedicated to God. In chapter XVII, the Lord points out various kinds of *Tapas*, – of *body*, *speech*, and *mind*. Verse 14, “worship of the Gods, *Dwijas*, preceptors and sages, purity, straightforwardness, continence and harmlessness are austerities of the body. Verse 15

:- Inoffensive speech, truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and the study of the Shastras, are austerities of speech. Verse 16:- Mental clearness, equilibrium, silence, self-control and benevolence, are austerities of the mind”.

In the text under notice, the Lord says, He Himself is the Enjoyer of *all sacrifices and penances*. For, He is ever the true Doer and Dispenser. No other Being on Earth or in Heaven can shake a blade of grass without His permission and Will. The only God who is to be propitiated for the sake of any blessing great or small is He.

At the commencement of this chapter, we were told that *Sanyasa* and *Yoga* were the two ingredients of *karmayoga*. Dispassion and dedicated work were mentioned as the ingredients, and their relative worth was also adverted to. Parts of the chapter treated of one, and parts, of the other. Incidentally, *gnana* was discussed to some extent, and *Dhyana* (meditation) also, as the cause of *gnana*. But the main theme of the chapter is ‘*Sanyasa and Yoga*’, and the chapter itself goes by this designation. In the verse under comment, ‘यज्ञतपसां’ briefly adverts to *Yoga* and *Sanyasa*, because यज्ञ comprehends work done and dedicated to God, and तपः comprehends every kind of Renunciation (संन्यास). The Lord speaks of Himself very appropriately as the pivot on which all holy acts and abstinences turn and as the true destination and goal of every piety.

(2) The next epithet describes Sri Krishna as the august Ruler of all the worlds (सर्वलोकमहेश्वरं). Each world may have some Deity told off to rule it. The true Tuler, however, is He is the Ruler of Rulers. What is the good of approaching, seeking or propitiating lesser deities? They are but dependent Gods. The seeker should seek One who is veritably the Most High, and that is Sri Narayana. 'Maheswara' is sometimes deemed to be a name of Siva or Rudra. In Padmottara Purana, chapter 226, verses 71,72,73,74,75, contain the words of Rudra himself addressed to Narayana, in which the term 'महेश्वरः', is applied to that latter as the only Being who deserves to be known by that name (Vide Sanskrit exposition).

(3) The second line calls God, 'the Universal Friend' (सुहृदं). If God be a mighty Enjoyer and Ruler, He might be too high, too great, and too inaccessible, for the human seeker. This fear is allayed by the soothing epithet that God is the best Friend of all Beings. He bestows His Grace unasked. He is ever accessible and gracious. His condescension is not haughty but friendly.

(4) Finally, God is शान्ति. This word means ordinarily *Peace or Quiescence*. It denotes the State of Liberation which means everlasting Peace. In the text here, it means the *Bestower of Peace*. In *Karmayoga*, the aim is not a sordid fruit of this world, or of the next, but Moksha. God accepts कर्मयोग and is expected to confer Mukti. If He were inefficient to confer it,

there would be no object in seeking Him. Sri Krishna therefore, says "I am the Enjoyer of Yagna and Tapas, and I am also *the bestower of Mukti*. Whoever knows Me as such, has *truly* known Me and will come to Me."

Between Sri Madhwa and the other commentators there is some difference in interpreting the word शान्ति.

Whereas Sri Madhwa regards शान्ति as an epithet qualifying मां, so that it is a description of God, the other commentators construe it to mean 'Peace' and take it as the object of the verb ऋच्छति (attains).

Ramanujacharya thinks that there is no allusion in the text to *Moksha* or any other blessing derivable *after* death. He says that the verse is meant to show how *Karmayoga* is easier than, and superior to, *gnanayoga*. Accordingly, शान्ति refers to the peace of mind and the happiness felt by the Karmayogin during the performance of pious work.

This rendering is not convincing. In the first place, there is not a syllable in the verse which may mean that *Karmayoga* is easier than *gnanayoga*. That it is easier than, and superior to, *gnanayoga* is a tenet of this Teacher, which has been discussed already. Secondly, the sage who has known God is said to attain शान्ति. Why it should not refer to the bliss or rewards attainable by the karmayogin in the *shape of gnana*

here and Mukti hereafter, is incomprehensible. The security and self-satisfaction that every honest man feels over his rectitude is hardly worthy of being spoken of here as the only शान्ति attained by the sage.

In the school of Sankaracharya, शान्ति is construed to signify the beatitude of Adwaitic self-realization. The difficulty for them lies in the circumstance that the knower of *Sri Krishna, the Lower Brahman*, the conditioned one, is said to reach such a goal; because their theory is that it is the knowledge of the Higher Brahman, the unconditioned, that alone confers *Mukti*. Neelakanta deals with this point and says that the sage, first of all, becomes one with the Lower Brahman, and, from that step, soars to the final destination. It is far worse than a dry-dream that any one can ever become Lower Brahman or the Higher Brahman at any time by any manner of means whatsoever. If Sri Krishna meant to tell Arjuna so, He could certainly have used proper words to that effect, and avoided the language that we find in the text. As it stands, the verse is worded very lucidly to make out that God is *great* and we are *small*, that He is to be *worshipped* and we are His *worshippers*, that He is to be *sought and known* and we are but humble seekers of light. Hence it seems to me that the wording of this text does not favour Adwaita.

END OF CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

PART I

This chapter is designated *Sanyasa-yoga*, as it deals with *Sanyasa* and *Yoga*.

Whereas the second chapter is called *Sankhya-yoga*, this chapter is called *Sanyasa-yoga*. This shows that the word '*Sanyasa*' is advisedly used with a view to convey a slightly different meaning from what *Sankhya* usually denotes. This will be noticed presently.

Arjuna wishes to know whether *Sanyasa* or *Yoga* is the better course. The Lord replies that both are commendable, and that, of the two, *Yoga* is better.

Sanyasa is understood in the question as well as the reply, to mean not the *Ascetic Order* but *Renunciation*. It is not the renunciation of *actions* that is contemplated, but the renunciation of *love and hate, of passion* in general.

Thus understood, the meaning of Sri Krishna's reply that both are commendable becomes clear. It is not intended to compare and contrast the *Ascetic's life* with that of the house-holder. It is not *gnanayoga* that is weighed against *Karmayoga* in the scale and found wanting. (This point was disposed of at the beginning of chapter III.) The Lord tells Arjuna that *Karmayoga* has two elements, *viz.*, (i) renunciation of passion, and (ii) pious performance of work. These should combine in harmony. —Either, by itself, is hardly

of much use. Of the two, however, the latter is the more important factor, because it means and implies a life of pious devotion of God. The former is, no doubt, meritorious, because dispassion is a rare virtue. But it is a negative virtue after all, and cannot be compared with the greatness of religious Devotion.

A life of renunciation is associated, generally speaking, with *Sankhya*, and a life of work with *Yoga*. Inasmuch as Karmayoga is, truly speaking, renunciation of love and hate combined with devotional performance of work, and because the end of both the elements is the same, *Sankhya* and *Yoga* are virtually identical. It is ignorant men that take them as essentially distinct courses.

One who attempts a life of absolute renunciation will find it very hard, indeed, to adopt with success. From Rudra downwards none has totally renounced passions. It is therefore desirable that a life of busy work is chosen and is rendered sacred by means of Dedication to God and purifying the mind as far as possible by means of Virakti. One had better *do work* in the conviction that the Ruler of all is his Ruler too, and that He would best take care of His Bhaktas. Although engaged in work, let the karmayogin feel that he himself is *not* the true Doer but that God alone is the true prompter, doer and enjoyer. Let *Sankalpa*, the parent of Desire, be renounced on this conviction of man's dependence on God. The result of this dispassionate worship and freedom from egotism is that he is unstained by the natural consequences of the working life, just as the lotus-leaf is unstained

by the water in which it lives, moves, and has its being.

From time immemorial, Yogins have been doing their work in this manner, the mind ever kept pure while the Body and the senses were allowed to be busy. They regarded the Body as merely a city of nine-gates where they had to dwell for a time. They realized how frail, weak, and vulnerable, their city was, and how distinct they themselves were from the city they sojourned in.

It is wrong to think that God arbitrarily creates work and doership for man and abdicates His own association therewith. On the other hand, He is present in everything, prompts every doing, and participates in its execution. He regulates every bit of man's work and others' work too on well-established principles of impartiality. Hence, He is never affected by any sins or merits of men. Nor does any man incur sin or acquire merit of his own free choice. But, as a rule, men are deluded, and entertain very incorrect notions as to their own freedom of choice.

When, by a life of true renunciation and true work, the mind gets pure, and God-vision is attained, then God stands revealed like a resplendent Sun. the immediate result is that the seer is plunged in God out and out, and is absorbed in His contemplation. He makes God the very life of his life and looks up to none else and nothing else. Sins vanish and the goal is assured. He realizes the existence of one and the same God in the Brahmin, the cow, the elephant,

the dog, and the chandala, and feels the Divine Presence everywhere in fullness and perfection in spite of all the disparities of creation.

He is fixed in God and cannot be moved therefrom. Pleasure and pain do not move him. Whatever happiness is possible from external life, is, by him, attained a million-fold from his life of Devotion. For, external pleasures have a beginning and an end so that the wise man looks with indifference on whatever is ephemeral. As between Vairagya and Devotion, whatever bliss is available by way of mental serenity to the self-denying. Virakta, that too is derived by the pious devotee in an everlasting form by reason of His Divine contemplation. Hence, Yoga is superior to Sanyasa (understood in the sense of *Desire-renunciation*).

Let every one think of the high goal and make up his mind to combine Sanyasa and Yoga in a happy blend. The Seer of established God-vision commands a store of inward bliss. His sport is within and his Light is within. His master is not a Being of flesh and blood but Brahman—the non-material (Nirvana). He reaches that Master with all his Doubts *banished* from his mind. Then he is at peace with all beings in the world, bent on universal benevolence.

Sanyasa leads to this state. Yoga too leads to it. Both act in harmony. Before God-vision is however actually reached, a long course of meditation is gone through. Wordly wants being rejected, he sits down for the Yoga of meditation with eyes fixed on the gap

of the eye-brows and practises the control of breaths. Bent on no goal less than Moksha, he meditates on Sri Krishna. His efforts are rewarded by the vision transcendental. He is face to face with God the Enjoyer of all work and penance, the Supremest Ruler of the world, and the Universal Friend and Refuge. The points brought out are the following:—

(i) Karmayoga consists of Sanyasa and Devotion, and the latter is superior to the former.

(ii) *Dispassion* and *Dedication* are both to be practised, the due combination whereof leads to God-vision.

(iii) Sankhya and Yoga are one and the same in the sense that *Dispassion and Dedication* form a happy blend for promoting the seeker's spiritual progress.

(iv) God is the chief Doer. Man is only a subordinate agent acting under God's will and guidance.

(v) Any other interpretation which raises *Sanyasa* above *yoga*, or which makes *karmayoga* superior to *gnanayoga*, fails to convey the Lord's meaning, where he has used the words *Sanyasa* and *Yoga*.

PART II

(a) THE SCHOOL OF ADWAITA

According to Sankaracharya, this chapter brings out the following points.

Arjuna is told that for *him*, Yoga is better than Sanyasa. Truly speaking, *gnanayoga* is the proper path for the Mumukshu. But a high degree of Virakti is an essential qualification for that course. That course being yet unsuited to Arjuna, he is exhorted to adopt the lesser course. No doubt, karmayoga is stated in verse 2 to be superior to *Sanyasa*. But this statement is not to be too literally understood. It is to be so understood relatively to Arjuna. Moreover, true karmayoga is better than false Sanyasa. Low Sanyasa is what we often meet with in the world, of unworthy men getting ordained as Ascetics.

Notwithstanding the eulogy of Karmayoga here and there, the trend of the chapter is to be understood as accentuating the real superiority of *gnanayoga*. Verses 10 and 11, for example, which speak of surrendering actions unto God are applicable only to the ignorant. As the sage realizes the unreality of *Pooja* and everything else, he does no Pooja at all. It is the non-sage that is expected to worship Iswara, the Lower brahman who alone is competent to bestow mental purity on his devotee. Under verses 7, 17, 18, 24 and 28, the realization of Adwaita is taught. (N.B. There are, in these verses, catch-words that school always interprets in this direction).

Under verses 13, 15, 19 and 20, the Unreality of *karma* (work) is taught. Under verse 13, the superiority of *Sanyasa* to *Yoga* is laid down, notwithstanding the converse stated in verse 2. Under verse 15, Pooja to God is deprecated, because that is the work of the ignorant. Verse 19 points out that the utmost

license is allowed to the sage for dining anywhere, or doing anything, as he pleases.

Where the seer is described to be possessed of *bliss* or *happiness* as in verse 13, the statement is not to be taken literally. Neither the seer nor Brahman is possessed of happiness. The negation of the opposite is what is invariably meant wherever any positive attribute is *predicated of Brahman*. It is to be noted that on some of the chief points said to be strongly brought out in this chapter, considerable diversity of opinion is found among the members of this school.

To note Sreedhara first, whereas Sankaracharya and others treat verses 7 to 11 as partly applying to the sage alone and partly to the seeker alone, Sreedhara takes them all, like Sri Madhwa, to be of general application.

Verse 15 which is one of the leading verses, according to Sankaracharya and others, for laying down the unreality of work, is understood otherwise by Sreedhara to be a vindication of God's impartiality on the footing that God rewards or punishes men only according to their deserts. Verse 17 which is, by this school, considered to be a strong pronouncement of Adwaita and Renunciation, especially the words तदात्मानः and तन्निष्ठाः is construed by Sreedhara strictly on the lines of religious *devotion*.

Abhinava Guptacharya is a member of this school of thought who indulges now and again in flashes

of esoteric sense. Under verse 18 where the Brahmin, the cow, the elephant, the dog, and the chandala, are said, to be *Brahman* on the footing of Adwaita, this Guptacharya advises the Yogin to think of them as Brahman and therefore equal to another, but not to *deal with them* on that footing. Under verse 27 where the Meditator is spoken of as sitting down with his eyes fixed between the eye-brows, this Guptacharya takes "eyes" to mean all the senses, the 'eye-brows' to denote likes and dislikes, the breaths to signify good and evil and the 'nose' to denote the Mind. The reader's attention is directed to the notes under that verse.

As to *Brahman being the world*, there are two well-known theories obtaining in the school. Some are of opinion that Brahman is the world as *Mud* is the *Pot* or as *Gold* is the *bangle*. This is उपादानवाद. Others hold that Brahman is but the background of an illusion as the mother-of-pearl is of an imaginary piece of silver. This is विवर्तवाद. Under verse 7, Madhusoodana adopts the *Upadana theory*, while others prefer विवर्त in that connection (सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा).

In the face of the strongly worded assertion in verse 4 about *Sankhya* and *Yoga* being identical, some of these commentators hesitate to say that Sri Krishna meant just the reverse of what He said. That the converse alone is true is however a pet theory of theirs. Hence Neelakanta thinks that *Sankhya* and *Yoga* denote the *Unconditioned Brahman* here. This completely upsets the cogency of the reasoning which is

meant to weigh the relative value of *Yoga* and *Sanyasa*. Neelakanta has failed to note this, and his brother of Utkarsha Deepika refutes him.

Venkatanath is now more sparing in his criticism of Sri Madhwa. He makes it up, however, by the bitterness of language employed in his notes on verse 16. there he points to the word आत्मनः used in the singular number, and thinks that the use of the *singular* should bring tears to the eyes of every Dualist. In his opinion, the use of the singular is unmistakable proof that the Atman is but one and that Jeevas are one with Brahman. Under the same verse, Venkatanath thinks that Sri Madhwa has blown hot and cold in respect to *Positive Nescience* भावाविद्या. No doubt, the reasoning of Adwaitic writers in respect to *Positive Nescience* is criticized by us. At the same time, भावाविद्या is accepted by us as a matter of fact. Venkatanath says that, as Sri Madhwa accepts भावाविद्या as a fact, he criticizes Adwaitic writers on this point just for the pleasure of the thing, with a view to enjoy their discomfiture, like a man cutting off his own nose in order to bode ill omen to those he meets on the road.

This criticism is as unjust as it is petty. Sri Madhwa and his disciples see that भावाविद्या cannot be demonstrated by means of *Reason alone*, as Sankara-writers think. As in the case of God, so in the case of भावाविद्या, the Vedic Revelation is our only refuge. This is what Sri Madhwa points out. He has, therefore, not blown hot and cold at all.

PART II, SECTION (b).

The School of Ramanujacharya.

The leading idea of this school namely the *equality* of all Jeevas and God in essence, is traced to verses 7 and 18. सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा (verse 7) is interpreted on this footing. So also the verse No. 18 treating of the Brahmin, the cow, and the Chandala.

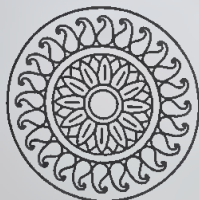
It is pointed out that the tenet to Karmayoga being superior to gnanayoga is alluded to in this chapter too (see verses 2 and 6). It is said that Arjuna specifically addressed his inquiry to this very point in spite of the fact that he had been abundantly told of it before. One reason for the supposed superiority, viz., that *gnanayoga* is a hard and impracticable course, is traced to verse 6.

That all action is to be attributed to the *Body* and the *senses* rather than to the Atman, is traced to verses 8, 9 and 13. the impelling power of actions is said to be वासनाः — by which is meant the accumulated hoard of past instincts and experience. Verse 14 therefore says स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते.

In suiting the language employed to this theory in verse 10, the word ब्रह्मणि is construed to signify Prakriti. Whereas Sri Madhwa reads "Surrender actions unto God" to be the central point of the teaching, Ramanujacharya does not so understand the reference in those instances. This verse 10, for instance, which

is an emphatic exhortation to such a surrender, is interpreted to mean that the wise man relegates doership and responsibility to Prakriti and thereby avoids being a materialist. In verse 19, the word ब्रह्म is construed to mean the *Jeeva* rather than God.

It is worthy of note that, under verse 12, there is reference made to a class of souls called नित्यसंसारिः. What the exact doctrine is, as held by this school on this particular point, is not clear. It is not easily reconcilable with the 'Equality' doctrine forming one of the fundamental articles of their creed.



॥ श्रीः ॥

CHAPTER - 6

षष्ठोऽध्यायः ।

श्रीभगवानुवाच —

1) अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥

श्रीभगवान्	...	The Lord
उवाच	...	said
अनाश्रितः	...	not depending on
कर्मफलं	...	fruit of action
कार्यं	...	what is to be done
कर्म	...	action
करोति	...	does

यः	...	who
सः	...	he
संन्यासी, च	...	Sanyasin too
योगी, च	...	and Yogin
न निरग्निः	...	not the one without Fire
न च अक्रियः	...	not the one without observances

"The Lord said,

'He who does what ought to be done, irrespective of its fruit, is both a *Sanyasin* and a *Yogin*—and not the person of no Fire and no observance.'

We begin a new chapter. It deals with *Dhyana yoga* (meditation), in which the mind practises concentration of thought. It is one of the advanced stages of Ashtangayoga. When memory is highly developed, the power of retention is strong. But recollections are seldom unbroken. They are interspersed with other ideas and distractions. Where a single thought rules the mind for a time more or less prolonged, it is ध्यान. Where concentration obeys the will *without effort* as an automatic function, it is Samadhi (meditative trance). The present chapter deals with ध्यान in both the stages of intensity.

No doubt, we find mention made in this chapter of other preparatory acts and stages also, such as posture. They are, however, of a preparatory character meant to qualify the seeker for ध्यान. Hence the main topic of the chapter is Meditation.

This subject was briefly adverted to in verses 27 & 28 of chapter V. We were told there how the seeker should shut out the senses and sit down with eyes fixed between the eye-brows and breaths restricted and harmonized. The theme thus briefly treated of is going to be set forth at some length in the present chapter.

In chapter II, verse 39, *Yoga* was begun. It is a generic word for *Karmayoga* and *Dhyanayoga*. In that chapter and later, *Karmayoga* was treated of in various aspects. The yoga of action having received a more or less lengthy treatment, the yoga of meditation next claims attention. It is appropriate that it should come immediately after *Karmayoga*, for, the latter forms a preparation for Devotional Meditation. It is not until the mind is pure and pious that the seeker becomes fit for ध्यान. Moreover, meditation itself is an indispensable preparation for God-vision. Hence *Karmayoga*, *Dhyana* and *Gnana*, have been discussed in their logical sequence.

The verse (under comment) picks up the thread by calling attention *Karmayoga* once more before proceeding to the main topic of the chapter. We find it laid down in the Shastras that *Sanyasins* and *Yogins* are the persons qualified for Meditation (ध्यान). The *Sanyasin* in the Hindu System and as popularly understood, is a well-known individual who enters into the Fourth Order and leads a particular kind of life. If none but the *Sanyasin*, thus understood, may 'meditate', the members of the other Orders,

namely, the bachelor, the householder and the Forest-Recluse, stand debarred from Meditation. The question is whether this position is sound.

According to Sri Madhwa, the intention of the Lord is not to debar the member of *any* Order from Devotional Meditation. No doubt, it is often said that the *Sanyasin* alone is so qualified. But in saying so, the word does not mean "a member of the Fourth Order." It is used in its literal and not the technical sense. Whoever has renounced passions is a *Sanyasin*. Whoever works and dedicates the task to God is a *Yogin*. Thus liberally construed, any true *Karmayogin* is qualified for Meditation. Early in chapter V the signification of *Sanyasa and Yoga* as Sri Krishna wishes it to be understood was discussed. There is no need to repeat it here. Sri Krishna reminds us briefly by laying down with some emphasis that that man alone who does his duty irrespective of its fruit is, in his opinion and for the purpose of His teaching, *the true Sanyasin and the true Yogin*.

The emphasis of the lesson is brought out in the last words of the verse. There, it is said, 'One who is without Fire and without rites is not to be deemed a true sanyasin or Yogin.' The meaning of this has been the subject of some controversy.

It is the common belief that the ascetic of the Hindu system (*i.e.*, a member of the Fourth Order) has *no Fire* and *no rites*. If this be correct, the text is tantamount to saying that no ascetic is fit for Meditation. This would amount to an unmerited

censure on, and condemnation of, 'asceticism.' There is no reason to give the other *Asramas* a monopoly of 'Meditation' and disqualify the ascetic simply because of the *Order* to which he belongs. Hence it is not a sound position to take up if we hold that the ascetic is not fit for Meditation, although, by reason of dispassion and disattachment, he may be fit and qualified.

Thus it is not right to construe निरग्नि and अक्रिय of the verse to signify the technical ascetic. For, such a construction leads to the absurdity of disqualifying all *ascetics* for *Meditation* and enabling members of the inferior Orders to enter on ध्यान. Moreover, Sri Madhwa points out that the *ascetic* is, in fact and truth, *not without Fire and Rites*. No doubt, he does not worship in and through Fire-sacrifice as householders should. Nor does his duty run on the lines of actions, observances and ceremonies, laid down for the other Orders.

But none the less, the ascetic has his own *sacrifice* and his own obligations. When he takes to the ascetic Order, he withdraws the old Fire into his body. Hereafter, his work is more mental than physical. But he has not outsoared the region of duty. If external 'Fire' and outward tasks were the sole criterion, he might be deemed a person without *Fire and Rites*. But sacrifice and duty have a wider meaning. In chapter IV, verses 25 to 32, the Lord went thoroughly into this matter and instanced a number of internal *Yagnas* applicable to the 'ascetic'.

As the ascetic is not '*without Fire and Rites*', the disqualification and censure implied in the text does not apply to him. But whom does it apply to?

In the Sankhya school, Kapila lays down as an indispensable qualification for Meditation that the devotee do relegate *work* to Matter (प्रकृति) and that he do attribute freedom of action to Matter and free the spirit from any responsibility whatever. In this school, everyone, be he of the fourth Order or any other, is exhorted to give up Fire and actions if he cares for Meditation. Sri Krishna protests against the creed which thus implies hostility between Karmayoga and Meditation. He says that the '*Fireless and Actionless*' votary of the Sankhya system is neither the Sanyasin nor the Yogin that is truly competent for ध्यानयोग, but only that man who performs his duty without selfishness.

I have thus far summed up the position of Sri Madhwa. Briefly put, he is against taking *Sanyasa* to mean the technical ascetic, nor does निरग्नि and अक्रिय denote a member of the Fourth Order. In his view, everyone has his sacrifice and his duty from the cradle to the grave, and all who renounce 'desire' etc., become qualified for *Dhyana*.

Sankaracharya presents the text in his own way. It is a fundamental tenet of this school that 'work' is the province only of the ignorant. It is not admitted that every person ought to engage himself in work and duty all his life. The ascetic has no *Fire and*

no work at all. This being so, it is clear that the ascetic alone is the true Sanyasin and the Yogin. A non-ascetic does not, strictly speaking, deserve that appellation. Here in the verse under notice, the Lord eulogises the Grihastha (house-holder) and calls him a Sanyasin and a Yogin on account of his unselfish work. This is but a praise and is not to be literally taken. The idea is that the house-holder becomes *nearly as good as* a Sanyasin and Yogin by the renunciation of Desires. The man of "no fire and no work" is, of course, a Sanyasin and a Yogin. Not only he, but the house-holder, too, deserves that designation if he be unselfish.

The reader will mark the difference between Sri Madhwa and Sankaracharya. The Former subjects all to a single test, namely, whether 'Desire of fruit' is clung to or has been given up. The latter takes '*ascetics*' to be true renouncers (संन्यासिनः) *ipso facto*, and, in the case of non-ascetics, it is at best but eulogium to call them Sanyasins and Yogins. This divergence of view is based on the difference of opinion between the two in respect to the obligatoriness of work and duty. Whereas Sri Madhwa thinks that no man is exempt from work and duty at any period or stage of his life, Sankaracharya grants exemption from obligations to all who enter on the Fourth Order and those who have realized *Unity*. His Bhashya under this verse is long and discusses many a detail in relation to this doctrine.

Ramanujacharya thinks that the verse reaffirms the superiority of *Karmayoga* to *Gnanayoga*. From

verse No. 7, chapter III, in particular, he harps on the view that Karmayoga is less risky than Gnanayoga and more easy and efficacious than Gnana Nishta to bring about true wisdom. He holds that, whereas Gnanayoga requires the aid of Karma to some extent, the Karmayoga is independent of the other and hence the practitioner of Karmayoga is virtually both a Sanyasin and a Yogin, whereas the Gnanayogin is only a Sanyasin. The person brushed aside as inferior by the terms निरग्नि and अक्रिय is, according to this Teacher, the *Gnanayogin*.

In this presentment of the purport, the only merit that I can see is the pertinacious consistency with which this particular point is being urged by this Teacher. But the doctrine itself seems radically unsound. It is wrong to look on *Karmayoga* as something superior to *Gnanayoga*. The position is untenable that Karmayoga is a completely self-contained course and that the other, however, is not so. If Karmayoga is complete within itself, Gnanayoga is equally so. It is not easy to follow the reasoning that the *Karmayogin* is both a Karmayogin and a Gnanayogin, while Gnanayogin is not possessed of such a dual merit.

In summing up the stand-points of the three commentators, the views may be compared thus. According to Sankaracharya, the ascetic alone is qualified for the course of Meditation. But, by way of eulogy, the householder is stated to be as good as a Sanyasin and a Yogin here. According to Ramanujacharya,

the ascetic's path is more risky and less efficacious than that of the householder and the Karmayogin, although both the paths may lead to wisdom. Hence Karmayoga is recommended for adoption in preference to Gnanayoga.

According to Sri Madhwa, there is no reference here either to the ascetic or the Gnanayogin. These are neither extolled nor despised. The question whether the ascetic is fit for Meditation because of his asceticism is neither raised nor considered here. Nor is the Gnanayogin's relative position to the Karmayogin the subject-matter of the lesson under notice. The first six chapters relate to Karmayoga in the main. Karmayoga furnishes the requisite preparation for the practice of Meditation. Whatever be the Asrama of the person, if he gives up likes and dislike and dedicates his doings to God, he becomes qualified for ध्यान. Such a man is a *Sanyasin and a Yogin*, whether he be an ascetic or a householder or anything else.

From the beginning of chapter V, Sri Madhwa has been insisting on this liberal and literal rendering of *Sanyasa and Yoga* to the exclusion of its technical significance.

2) यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥

यं ... what
संन्यासं ... is Sanyasa

इति	...	thus
प्राहुः	...	they say
योगं	...	Yoga
तं	...	that
विद्धि	...	know
पाण्डव	...	O! Arjuna
न	...	not
हि	...	indeed
असंन्यस्तसङ्कल्पः	...	of unrenounced egotism and desire
योगी	...	the Karmayogin
भवति	...	becomes
कश्चन	...	any one

“What they call *Sanyasa*, that, do you know, as *Yoga*, O! Arjuna. Indeed, no one who has not renounced egotism and desire becomes a *Yogin*.”

The foregoing verse said that it is the renouncer of fruits that is truly a *Sanyasin* and a *Yogin* and not one who professes to have given up ‘Fire and work’. The expression that “he is a *sanyasin* and a *Yogin*” shows that *Sanyasa* and *Yoga* are distinct from each other. In one sense, they are. In another, they are not. We forget not that ‘*Sanyasa*’ here is not ‘asceticism’ technically understood. It means ‘dispassion’. *Yoga* is often used in a double sense. It means *Karmayoga* which signifies “absence of passion coupled with unmercenary performance as a piece of Divine worship.”

This is its chief import. It is also used occasionally to denote "Dedicated work" alone, leaving out the part relating to 'dispassion'. If Yoga is used in the latter sense, then it is clearly distinguishable from 'Sanyasa' which stands for 'dispassion'. If, however, Yoga means Karmayoga so as to comprehend both the elements of 'dispassion' and 'pious work,' then 'Sanyasa' being but an ingredient of *Karmayoga* is not distinguishable from it. From this it may be clear in what sense योगी is used in the last verse and in the present one. The last verse is worded on the footing that sanyasa and Yoga are different from each other. This, however, is not absolutely correct, because they are one in another sense. Hence the Lord hastens to point out how they are to be deemed *one* for all intents and purposes. He says that as no *Karmayogin* is conceivable unless and until he has got rid of all mental fevers and cankers such as egotism and desire, 'dispassion' virtually marks him as his chief disringuishing characteristic. It is not mere work or merely pious work that suffices, but pious work *done without passion* that constitutes the *Karmayogin*.

The School of Sankaracharya presents the lesson in the following light: (I give the purport in my own words).

Asceticism is *Sanyasa*. The *Karmayogin* is a householder. (गृहस्थ). Yoga is two-fold. (i) the Yoga of Meditation, and (ii) the Yoga of action (ध्यानयोग and कर्मयोग). *Sanyasa* is virtually the same as the Yoga

of Meditation. But, the 'Yoga of action' is inferior to them. The last verse and the present verse eulogise the *Yoga of action* and call it equal to *Sanyasa and Dhyanayoga*. It is said here, "What they call Sanyasa is Yoga." 'They' refers to the Vedic texts which describe the ascetic.

By the word संन्यास in the text we should take both Sanyasa and ध्यान, these two being virtually the same. As for *Karmayoga*, it is praised as being equal to *Sanyasa and Dhyanayoga*, because of some similarity: the resemblance between *Karmayoga and Sanyasa* consists in this, that renunciation of fruit is common to both. For, while the ascetic renounces both *work and fruit*, the Karmayogin renounces *fruit* alone, adhering to work. Thus renunciation of fruit being a common feature, the predication of identity made in the verse is not wrong. Similarly, there is some resemblance between the *Yoga of action* and the *Yoga of Meditation*. In the Yoga of Meditation, the practitioner overcomes *all* the mental functions. They are divided into numerous parts in the Yoga Shastras.

Among them one is राग, *attachment*. The Karmayogin too expels this, although he cannot afford to give up other mental functions. Absence of attachment is therefore common to ध्यानयोग and कर्मयोग. "On account of the similarity noted above, the present verse praises the *Karmayogin* as equal to the 'ascetic' and the 'Meditator' ". Thus is the purport gatherable from Sankara Bhashya and other annotations.

What we cannot accede to in this exposition is the supposition that a half-hearted praise has been bestowed on *Karmayoga*. Some remote resemblance has been unearthed between *Karmayoga* on the one hand and *Sanyasa* and *Dhyanayoga* on the other, and, on that footing, the statement of identity has been justified. This is not convincing. If *Sanyasa* denotes 'asceticism' here, there is no reason to speak of the householder as being equal to him. Nor is there sufficient reason to make the householder equal to the 'Meditator'. The *Dhyanayogin* is a very advanced adept who has trained the mind and the senses to obey him like slaves. The *Karmayogin* is, however, in the lower rungs of the ladder. Where is the occasion to institute a comparison between them? Nor is it a sound position that the ascetic has no work or duties to perform. It is an unsound tenet that he is absolutely above obligations of any sort.

As the Lord has furnished us with an excellent definition of '*Sanyasa*' in verse No.3 of chapter V to the effect that 'one who hates not and desires not is a perpetual ascetic', it is only right to apply this definition wherever the sense of the context requires it or admits of it. This is just what Sri Madhwa has done. The view that a eulogy of the householder is alone meant here is rather apologetic. When a more literal interpretation is easy and clear, there is no need to seek others which detract from the merits of the text literally understood.

Sri Madhwa's interpretation involves no loose *praise* of the householder, nor has it the effect of

underrating the 'Ascetic' or the 'Meditator.' The subject of the theme is *Karmayoga*. It is discussed on its own merits having regard to its component parts.

Ramanujacharya expounds the text in a different manner. सङ्कल्प denotes "the illusion by which the body is mistaken for the soul". Hence, the second line of the verse denotes a non-materialist. No *karmayogin* being conceivable without this fundamental conviction of the soul being different from the body, we are reminded in the text of this point that marks off the *Karmayogin* from the *Materialist*.

In the first line it is said "that Yoga (meaning *Karmayoga*) includes *Gnanayoga*. Its superiority rests on this footing. Whereas *Sanyasa*, by which name *Gnanayoga* is known, implies no work but only knowledge of the soul's distinctness from matter, *Karmayoga* implies both *work* and the *knowledge* aforesaid. Hence the Lord says in effect, 'O! Arjuna, Know that *Karmayoga* implies and comprehends *Gnanayoga* and not *vice versa*."

In this exposition of the text, 'Sanyasa' does not necessarily mean the ascetic order. No intention is imputed, of belauding the housholder above his deserts. Nor is it said that the Lord means to institute comparisons with the *ascetic* and the *Meditator* or that he refers to remote points of similarity.

But the interpretation adopted by Ramanujacharya on the expression सङ्कल्प is very far-fetched. He is harping on the deluded *Materialist* far

too much in finding an allusion to him almost everywhere in these chapters. *Sankalpa* denotes 'will, desire or resolve'. But it has been forced here by Desikar to mean 'a delusion of identity'. Then 'Spirit and Matter' are coolly thrust in as the things mistaken to be identical. Why not take *God* and *Man* as the two things mistaken to be One or why not take some other two things as the objects alluded to. There is nothing in the text or context to signify that 'spirit and matter' are the two things that the Lord had in mind.

Then again, the distinction drawn between *Karmayoga* and *Gnanayoga* that the former includes the latter but that the converse does not hold good has been largely discussed already. It is not a sound proposition at all. That *Karmayoga* includes *Sanyasa* is true and intelligible enough only on the ground that *Sanyasa* means 'dispassion'. But if it means 'asceticism' or 'gnanayoga' the proposition is not true.

The text says, 'Sanyasa is the same as Yoga'. Ramanujacharya says that the 'sameness' mentioned here is on the ground that both believe in the soul being distinct from matter. It is obviously far-fetched to suppose that 'Materialism' is the only target aimed at by the Lord whether there be words to that effect or not.

3) आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥

आरुरुक्षोः	...	seeking to enter on
मुनेः	...	for the devotee
योगं	...	the Yoga (the Yoga of Meditation)
कर्म	...	action
कारणं	...	the means
उच्यते	...	is said to be
योगारूढस्य	...	who is established in Yoga
तस्य	...	for him
एव	...	alone
शमः	...	renunciation
कारणं	...	is the means
उच्यते	...	said to be

“For the devotee seeking to enter on Yoga (the path of Meditation) action is said to be the means. For the same person established in Yoga, renunciation is said to be the means’.

The code of obligations and duties holds us as in a vice. The Lord imposes on us the additional command that action should be performed without desire of fruit. The question arises whether this tight domination of obligatory actions will ever be relaxed. To this question, the reply of the text is that, until the seeker is qualified thoroughly for Meditation and God-vision, the obligatoriness of duty lasts in full force. After that stage, the reins are loose so that the later course is less rigid and exacting than before and runs more on lines of renunciation than of physical activity.

Before proceeding further to explain the meaning of the text, it is necessary to point out that the same question seems referred to and answered in verse 52 of chapter II. It was said there that the full fruit of Karmayoga is attained only after all delusions are dispelled by God-vision. The idea brought out there is that action is obligatory till God-vision is attained. The objector may, therefore, urge with reason that there is no need to repeat the same idea.

The reply to this objection of redundancy is two-fold :- (i) In chapter II, Karmayoga was adverted to as a preparation for God-vision. Here, however, the relation of Karmayoga to 'Meditation' (ध्यानयोग) is the subject of reference. The Yoga of Meditation is not the same as God-vision ; but a stage anterior to it and leading thereto. This chapter (No.VI) is one devoted specially to the Yoga of Meditation. It is therefore appropriate that the relation of cause and effect between Karmayoga and Meditation is duly drawn attention to. It is also appropriate that the reader is told how the Yoga of Meditation is related to God-vision also.

(ii) It is also not incorrect to take it that in this verse, first line, 'action' is laid down as the cause and preparation to God-vision itself and that we are asked to be engaged in Karmayoga right up to the stage of God-vision. In this rendering, the lesson of the text becomes the same as that of verse 52, chapter II. But this is only partially. The first line of the text is to be deemed as a quotation or recapitulation of the said

verse 52 of chapter II with a view to add the predication of the second line. The point is to contrast the position of the seeker with that of the sage. In picturing the contrast, it becomes necessary, for the sake of clearness, to recall the contents of verse 52 of chapter II to memory. Hence the Lord quotes the teaching of that verse and proceeds to distinguish the seeker and the sage in respect to the character of the work each is tied down to.

The view of Sankaracharya is that 'work' binds only the seeker. He thinks that the seer, by which term is meant the person of 'realized unity', is absolutely free from any obligations to work. According to him, कर्म is action, and शम, used here as its antithesis, is inaction.

Sri Madhwa differs from Sankaracharya here and thinks that no person is exempt from work and duty of some kind or other. कर्म and शम may be antithetical to some extent but they are not wholly so.

The person referred to in the text as योगारूढ is either the man qualified for Meditation or, going one step higher, one who has visioned God. To such a person, the next step is the 'trance of Meditation' when the sensory experience is totally suspended and the seer's Mind is fixed one-pointedly on God. This condition is शम which means 'total quiescence', a state of utter irresponsiveness to sensations.

But texts of authority tell us that even the seer of attained God-vision cannot get into समाधि (the trance of Meditation) unless his Prarabdha Karma has been exhausted. In the absence of this qualification, the seer has to employ himself in work and duties. It may be that inaction does not stain him with sins, nor does it carry any penalties for him. But he has to work for setting an example to the ignorant. His pious doings serve to unfold for him the full measure of bliss that his soul is capable of when he leaves this world for good as a redeemed Jeeva. They secure for him Divine Grace in a special degree.

When the seer is thus engaged in a round of duties, it is still deemed one of शम or peace. There is no excitement about his doings, no hankering after an end, no hysterics over failures, and no pinings over disappointment. Moreover, his pursuits run more in the line of meditation, devotion, worship, study and teaching, than in outward pursuits of boisterous activity. Hence they are more doings of Renunciation than of activity.

In Geeta Tatparya, Sri Madhwa quotes Smriti verses and draws the contrast between the duties of the seeker and the sage in a slightly different manner. It is laid down there that the paramount duty of all men lies in serving their fellow-beings. Every person has his duty in serving his superiors, equals and inferiors. In doing these duties of various kinds, he has necessarily to lead a life of vigorous action. He has, moreover, to do so without selfishness. This

altruistic spirit purifies the mind and qualifies him for God-vision. But the seer of attained vision is no longer fettered in this rigid manner. He has, no doubt, to render service to his superiors. But in other absorbing pursuits of the world he need not participate. He may look with indifference on his equals and inferiors and engage himself, the while, in meditation, worship, study and teaching.

It is gratifying to note the spirit of altruistic beneficence adverted to here. 'Love and Service' is said to be the keynote of Karmayoga. It is hard to find a nobler sentiment in ethical literature.

4) यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥

यदा	...	when
हि	...	indeed
न	...	not
इन्द्रियार्थेषु	...	among the objects of sense
न	...	nor
कर्मसु	...	in actions
अनुषज्जते	...	feels a craving
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी	...	the renouncer of egotism
योगारूढः	...	one who is established in Yoga
तदा	...	then
उच्यते	...	is called

"Indeed, when the renouncer of egotism ceases to crave for the objects of sense and pleasurable actions, he is said to be established in Yoga'.

The last verse distinguished the seeker from the sage. It is not necessarily the sage of *Realized Vision* that is spoken of here. It is the man who is established in *Yoga*. Such a person is one whose mind has had sufficient training and practice to be absorbed in Meditation at will. He may be a sage who has visioned God or may not be. For, in some instances, even persons whose minds are sufficiently mature are delayed in reaching God-vision by reason of impediments such as *Prarabdha*.

The verse furnishes a definition of योगारूढ. It may be a sufficient definition to describe him as one who has attained God-vision. But it will be inaccurate in respect to those sages who are really established in *Yoga*, although, owing to impediments like *Prarabdha*, God-vision has not been yet attained by them. Hence a more correct definition is furnished by the text.

We are told that the person in whose mind there lurks not any trace of craving for the pleasures of the sense and for actions is योगारूढ. If all pleasures and actions are to be shunned, the sage is reduced to total indolence and inaction. Such a life has been condemned in several places before and also in the first verse of the present chapter. Is it then correct to understand the text to advocate a life of total inaction ?

The Lord proceeds, in the second line, to clear the doubt for us, by pointing out what he means by *renunciation of actions*. He says that to abandon egotistic resolves is the renunciation he has in view. It is not the indolent man that Sri Krishna looks upon as a Renouncer but the pious *Doer* who surrenders his actions unto God.

So He taught in verse No.30, chapter III, saying, 'Surrendering all actions to Me with your thoughts resting on God, freed from hope and egotism, do fight, cured of mental fever.' The Lord has been repeatedly insisting on a life of strenuous action, which, in His view, is perfectly consistent with *Renunciation*. His standpoint is clear. From the same stand-point, the text under comment lays down in the second line, that abandonment of egotism is the only sacrifice demanded of the Renouncer, and not enforced inactivity. A life of piety in which everything is surrendered to God and no freedom of action is arrogated to oneself is the qualification for the Yoga in question.

It stands to reason that, before a person launches on 'Meditation', his heart should be free from every vestige of lurking desires. It is not *attachment* alone, but every trace of it, that should be absent. No meditation or concentration is possible when the mind is liable to be distracted in the least. The seeker who is yet an immature *Karmayogin* may afford to get on with some attachments yet unbanished. But *the Yogin of Meditation* cannot get on with any possibility of diverted attention.

In this connection, it may be pointed out that the person adverted to as योगारूढ is distinguished from the mere *seekers* by the ease with which he practices renunciation. He withdraws his mind and senses without effort, whereas the seeker exerts himself with effort in this direction. In chapter II, verse 58, the example of the tortoise withdrawing its limbs at will was given for making the point clear. It holds good here also. The absence of अनुपङ्ग spoken of in the text refers to this effortless renunciation.

In the commentaries of the Advaitic school, two points are emphasized under this verse. They are (i) that all actions, good, bad and indifferent, forbidden or unforbidden, should be renounced *in totality* by the wise, (ii) that the rationale for it is to be found in the fact that *Brahman* alone is real and all else is false.

Sankarananda sets forth these points elaborately, with his usual wealth of detail. He says that the sage has no need to indulge in any work or observance and that he may even neglect rules of bath and cleanliness as well as rites and ceremonies of every kind. Although he may employ himself occasionally in work, he is unconscious of the distinction between the worker, the work and the means thereof. All is Brahman for him.

It is to be observed that the rationale of Renunciation above set forth is far from convincing. Apart from the merits of Monism which inculcates universal

unreality, it is difficult to see why the *Yogin* should renounce the objects of sense and actions so long as he continues in the *Vyavahara* plane. If the falsity of the world should be the reason for renunciation there is no need to select and specify *the objects of pleasure and actions* alone, markedly, as things to be abandoned. There is no object in asking the *Yogin* to give up *Sankalpa* which is only one of the myriad false things composing this false Universe. Whenever a religious or ethical lesson is given by the Lord to abstain from an act, Sankarananda is ready with his set phrases and arguments relating to the unreality of the world as the reason for the abstention inculcated. He cannot bear to see any injunction being based on or supported by a reasoning pitched on a lower key.

Sankaracharya does not support *Renunciation* on the ground of the world being unreal. He says that pleasures and actions are of no *use and benefit* and should therefore be abandoned. The rationale, according to him, is *utility* judged from a spiritual point of view. Neelakanta thinks that disattachment in an intense degree is advocated here. He too makes no reference to the basic theory of Monism as the reason of the teaching.

On the other point that a total renunciation of *every kind of work or duty* is contemplated, most of the Adwaitic commentators are agreed. On the other hand; Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhwa think that even the sage has to perform work and lies under an obligation to lead an active life of some kind till

he attains Mukti. Neelakanta, though of the Advaitic school, seems to perceive the unsoundness of the position that work of every *kind* should be renounced *altogether*. He says under this verse, that the sense-objects to be given up are pleasures and that the *actions* to be abandoned are such pursuits as are instrumental in securing sensual enjoyments. Neelakanta's limitation is, of course, highly sensible.

5) उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

उद्धरेत्	...	Let him lift
आत्मना	...	by the mind
आत्मानं	...	the Self (the Soul)
न	...	not
आत्मानं	...	the Self (the Soul)
अवसादयेत्	...	depress
आत्मा	...	the Mind
एव	...	alone
हि	...	indeed
आत्मनः	...	of the Self (the soul)
बन्धुः	...	friend
आत्मा	...	the Mind
एव	...	alone
रिपुः	...	is enemy
आत्मनः	...	of the Self (the Soul)

“Let him lift the *Self* by the Mind; let it not cause the self to sink. Indeed the mind alone is the friend of the *Self* and it is the same mind that is the enemy of the *Self*.”

There is a fine passage in Shanti Parva, Mahabharata, Chapter 301 (Calcutta Edition), which compares Samsara to an ocean and carries the simile into details. It is quoted in the Saskrit work. It runs thus :— “This ocean of Samsara is full of sorrows which are its waters. Anxiety and care are its cavities. Disease and death are the great alligators. Terrors are its snakes. The quality of Tamas constitutes its turtles; Rajas, its fishes. It is crossed with the aid of wisdom. Attachment is its mire. Decrepitude, its narrows. Knowledge is its lights, O! Kind. Its depths are Karma. Truths are its shores which are sustained by vows and pieties. Its swift currents consist of crimes of varied bitterness. Its gems are various kinds of pleasures. Pain and fever are its winds. Moans and longings are its eddies. Acute diseases are the elephants sporting in the waters. Heaps of bones constitute its flights of steps. Phlegm is the froth. Benefactions are the pearl banks. Pools of blood are the corals. Laughter and weeping are its roars. Infinite sciences constitute its impassability.

Tears are its brine, and renunciation of attachment is the great Refuge. Wives and children are its leeches. Friends and kinsmen are its ports. Its waves are deaths. It is held within bounds by harmlessness and Truth. Its haven is Vedanta. Universal love is the vast seas. To cross this ocean of submarine fires

is to reach the well-nigh inaccessible Mukti." This quotation is lengthy. But it will help the reader to realize the full force of the words उद्धरेत् and अवसादयेत् in the text which respectively signify 'uplifting from', and 'depressing into', depths.

The text calls upon the seeker to uplift his own soul and not to let it sink. The ship that he is told to secure for the purpose is called *Atman* (आत्मना). The meaning of this word depends on the view we take of the true means of salvation enjoined by religion. According to Sri Madhwa, God is the true saviour on whom every voyager should rely for crossing the great ocean. *Atman* is God. By His grace, the seeker is exhorted to uplift himself. (*Vide Geeta Tatparya*).

Other interpretations are also admissible. One such is pointed out in Sri Madhwa's Bhashya. In this, *Atman* means 'the Mind'. Hereby, attention is directed to the great truth that our minds are our best friends if properly managed, and our worst enemies if improperly used. Manu says that 'the Mind alone is the cause of bondage as well as liberation'. It is a powerful instrument in the hands of pious people, with whose aid, they march from and through Karmayoga to Meditation and onwards. On the other hand, it is the wicked ally of vice, sure to hurl into hell and damnation any who does not control it but submits to its tyrannies. The Lord says that the Seeker should use his mind as a powerful agent for good and uplift the soul.

That *Atman* (in आत्मना) means the Mind is agreed to by Madhusoodana, Neelakanta, Venkatanatha and Ramanujacharya.

It is not clear from the Bhashya of Sankaracharya whether he understands the word आत्मा (used seven times in the text) *throughout* as meaning the Self or whether he allows some at least to mean the Mind. His annotator, the author of Utkarsha Deepika, thinks that the former is Sankaracharya's meaning and criticises Madhusoodana and others.

The view of Utkarsha Deepika, if not also that of Sankaracharya, draws attention to the aspect that every man is the architect of his own destiny and must rely on none but himself for his own redemption. Just as a man's hunger and thirst are allayed by one's own eating and drinking, so the salvation of one's soul is brought about by one's own conduct and character. No amount of external guidance and help will be of avail if the person will not uplift *himself by himself*.

This rendering does not recognize the importance of God and His Grace. Nor does it bring out the power and potency of the *Mind* to make or mar our destiny. It says, however, that *Self* should be uplifted only by *Self*. As to how this 'uplifting' is to be accomplished, it is silent. Hence it need not be deemed to exclude the Grace or the co-operation of the Mind in the Path of Redemption.

It is tenet of the Advaita school that as between the soul and the Mind, latter is the true 'Doer'. They say that the *Soul (Atman)* is actionless by nature. It is not capable of willing, feeling, thinking, or doing. These, they hold to be purely mental functions with which the Atman has nothing to do. A member of this school of thought interprets the text with due emphasis on this particular tenet. His rendering may be briefly set down thus :-

(a) Atman (see the first word in the second line) is the Mind. It is the nominative of the sentence. Let the Mind uplift the Soul from the depths of *Samsara* and not let it sink. For, it is the Mind that imposes on *the Soul* its own attributes of agency and action. Being responsible for the delusion, let it reveal the true position to the Soul and point out to the latter how it is unherently free and actionless.

(b) Or the purport is this. Let the soul uplift the Mind by the Mind itself, as a thorn is removed by a thorn. The thing to be purified is not the soul but the Mind. The Mind thus cleansed by itself will be an ally and friend.

It is the Utkarsha Deepika that quotes this rendering for criticising it. It may be seen that the position taken up is clearly untenable. The analogy of the 'thorn' is misleading. According to the annotator, the soul is incapable of action. If so, what part can it play in using one thorn for removing another? *Ex hypothesi*, it is incompetent to cleanse or sully the Mind.

It is amusing to see that the Mind which is only an internal organ similar to the eye or the ear (which, however, are external) is called upon to uplift the soul. One would have thought that the soul was the higher entity which ought to control the Mind. Here the process is reversed and attributes legitimately belonging to animated beings are attributed to the Mind which is inanimate in essence.

In these circumstances, the interpretation contained in the Vivriti that the seeker is called on to invoke God for his aid and lift himself, is the most appropriate. Next best is the one that points out the importance of the seeker controlling and using his mind for the purposes of spiritual progress.

6) बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥

बन्धुः	...	friend
आत्मा	...	the Mind
आत्मनः	...	of Jeeva
तस्य	...	of that
येन	...	by which or whom
आत्मा	...	the mind
एव	...	itself
आत्मना	...	by the Jeeva, or Reason
जितः	...	is conquered

अनात्मनः	...	of one who is devoid of <i>Atman</i> (the conquered mind)
तु	...	but
शत्रुत्वे	...	in hostility
वर्तेत	...	will remain
आत्मा	...	the Mind
एव	...	itself
शत्रुवत्	...	like a foe

“Of the person by whom (or by whose Reason) the Mind itself is conquered, the Mind is the friend. If the person is devoid of a conquered Mind, the latter remains hostile, behaving like an enemy.”

This goes with the foregoing verse and constitutes an explanation of it. ‘Mind’ was said to be the friend or foe of the Jeeva according to circumstances. What sort of *Mind* is the friend or foe, and what sort of Jeeva commands the co-operation or provokes the hostility of the Mind, are the points that the text refers to. When the Mind is free from vicious thoughts and desires, it is a valuable friend, being under the control of, and acting always in obedience to, the master.

On the other hand, when it is self-willed, obstinate, and disobedient, it remains hostile and impedes the Jeeva’s spiritual development and progress. In the second line, the man whose Mind is not helpful to spirituality is spoken of as one who possesses *no* ‘Mind’. The sense is clear; not that he has no mind

literally, for, life implies the possession of the Mental organs, but that the organ happens to be unserviceable for legitimate purposes.

The man who has a large staff of lazy and disobedient servants is virtually no better than one who employs no servants at all. As pointed out under the last verse, Utkarsha Deepika and Sankarananda read the verses as a forcible pronouncement of the supposed fact that every man is the *free* builder of his own fortunes and destiny. For this enunciation, the word '*Atman*' used seven times in the last verse was interpreted throughout to mean '*the self*' alone. In the present verse, the word आत्मा occurs six times. With one exception, the word is interpreted here also to mean *the self*.

I have just said 'with one exception'. That is where it occurs as the nominative of the relative clause 'by whom आत्मा stands conquered.' Here आत्मा signifies, according to Sankaracharya and Sankarananda, the totality of vital functions that constitute the external or internal life of human beings. Sankarananda instances the activity and functions of the body, the breaths, the senses, the Reason, and the Ego (अहंकार) among the activities of life. It is conceivable how every one of these can be restrained from perverted attitudes and misbehaviour. A conquest of these means a successful discipline thereof in directions helpful to spiritual health and strength.

It seems to me that this relaxation of the rule in favour of the word आत्मा being construed in one place at least to denote the *non-self*, gives away nearly the whole show. It seriously mars and mutilates the proposition that 'the self is dependent *entirely and absolutely* on *self*.'

Is it quite correct to say that the Jeeva is thus efficient to work out his own salvation irrespective of God ? Sri Madhwa points out that he is not. The only '*Independent Being*' in the Universe is God, the Supreme cause of all causes. Without His Grace, the Jeeva is powerless to compass his own liberation. Hence the interpretations that convey a clear sense and illumine the text are (i) that God is the friend or foe of man according to the way the latter looks up to Him, and (ii) that the Mind of man is his friend or foe according as he chooses to culture it, the idea being similar to what Milton means by the lines 'The Mind is in its own place and makes a hell of heaven or a heaven of hell.'

Balgangadhar Tilak of Poona draws prominent attention to the Atman being quite *Self-dependent* (स्वतन्त्र) for working out his own redemption. He quotes Shanti Parva, Chapter 308, verses 27 to 30 (Edition with Neelakanta's commentary). These verses are found on page 510, Shanti Parva, Edition of Madhwa Vilas Book Depot, Kumbakonam.

I fear that the lines in Shanti Parva do not bear out the view that every Jeeva is an Independent Being and may achieve his own liberation without help. It

is an elementary article of Theism that Man is dependent on God for every blessing. Mukti, the goal, is most appropriately among the gifts of Providence. It is true only in a very subordinate sense that every man is the architect of his own destiny. This does not militate against the Theistic doctrine of God being the only true bestower and source of all blessings.

Nor do the lines (N.B.— Only three are quoted) quoted by Mr. Tilak convey the spirit of the context. The lines above and below the quoted ones (*Vide* Sanskrit exposition) show, on the other hand, that Man is far from being Independent. We are told there that the reward we get from God is only in accordance with what we pray for and deserve. If we worship God as a faulty imperfect being, we become faulty and imperfect too. If we worship Him as Free and Independent, we become free and independent likewise. This last condition is what we attain to in Mukti, although it is not true that, even there, we shake ourselves off free from the Supreme Ruler.

If the reader turn a few pages backward, he will find on pages 498 & 499 of the same Edition of Shanti Parva a thorough and unambiguous description of Mukti and Man's dependence on Narayana in every respect. After comparing Samsara to an ocean in a few verses of very happy similes, there occurs a description of the 'state' whence there is no return to Samsara. This is declared to consist in reaching the abode of Narayana. In this connection, Yudhishtira asks Bheeshma whether Muktas recollect the past or not and whether they are endowed with the faculties

of cognition and recognition. Bheeshma replies in the affirmative. He then proceeds to point out the relation of the senses to the soul as 'Servants' and 'Master'. The whole chapter is well worthy of study. It brings out our dependence on Narayana very prominently.

7) जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः । शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥

जितात्मनः	... of one who has triumphed over the Mind
प्रशान्तस्य	... the tranquil
परमात्मा	... God
समाहितः	... is present
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु	... Amidst cold and heat, pleasure and pain.
तथा	... as well as
मानापमानयोः	... in honour and dishonour

"God is present in the heart of one who has achieved mental conquest and become tranquil. Amidst cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as well as honour and dishonour,....."

The second line goes with कूटस्थ of the next verse. It is the first line of the verse that therefore needs to be considered here.

We were told that 'Atman' is our friend or foe according to circumstances. 'Atman' is either the Mind or God. How mental conquest or Divine worship leads us forward to salvation is explained by the first line of the present verse. It says that the person who has triumphed over 'the Mind' by self-control or has secured Divine Grace by prayer attains tranquility as the first fruit of his efforts. The tranquility here referred to as the fruit is a state of mental peace in which there is no longer any struggle with resisting thoughts, ideas and allurements. After this stage of perfect mental tranquility, the mind is qualified to vision God. Then Sri Naryana is present in his heart, is a special sense. He enables the sage to see Him and enjoy His Presence.

परमात्मा is a well-known word denoting God. आत्मा too denotes God very often, but as it signifies the Jeeva sometimes, the word पर is prefixed to it in order to obviate possible confusion and to exclude the Jeeva.

According to Sri Madhwa, परमात्मा is God and it is His presence in the heart that is spoken of as the sage's reward.

Ramanujacharya thinks that परमात्मा signifies the Jeeva. His reason is that God is not relevant in this topic, but only the Jeeva. But, surely, in the Yoga of Meditation, God is highly relevant, being the focus of one-pointed concentration for the Meditator's thoughts. Why God should, in such a context, be brushed aside as irrelevant is not clear. Ramanujacharya thinks that the Jeeva is *Paramatma*

in the sense that he is an Atman who becomes परम (exalted) by reason of mental conquest. It is explained that, relatively to his previous condition, he is now an elevated personage and deserves to be named परमात्मा.

Desikar points out that, as परमात्मा taken as a single compound word, should be admitted on all hands to be a special designation of God, to adopt any other signification and apply it to the Jeeva involves an undue strain. He thinks, therefore, that परमात्मा is not a single word but must be read as two words, परं and आत्मा as suggested by Ramanujacharya himself in the alternative. परं is an adverb qualifying समाहितः. The meaning thus is "The Atman (Jeeva) becomes prominently manifest (परं समाहितः) to the man of the conquered mind."

To break up परमात्मा into two words and make out a supposed '*manifestation*' of the Jeeva seems utterly far-fetched. There is nothing grand in the notion of *self-manifestation* understood as being in no way related to God.

Neelakanta and Madhusoodana are pleased with the device of splitting up the word परमात्मा into two words and making an adverb of परं, so that they adopt it without hesitation. Their meaning is that Advaitic Realization becomes *one of a high order* in the case

of the man of self-conquest. Utkarsha Deepika remarks that, as Adwaitic Realization does not admit of degrees into *low* and *high*, there is no sense in stating that a Realization of a high order is attained.

Desikar and Madhusoodana suggest, in the alternative, that परं may go with प्रशान्तस्य instead of with समाहितः in the sense of the adverb 'only', so that the meaning is that concentration is achieved *only* by the man of 'tranquil' mind, and by no other. Utkarsha Deepika objects to this also, observing that, as concentration is predicated of the tranquil, it follows necessarily therefrom, that the agitated cannot be tranquil and focus their thoughts and ideas, and consequently there is no need to add a separate word to denote that the privilege is *exclusively* theirs.

Sankaracharya and Sankarananda construe the text on the footing that the *Jeeva* and *Paramatma* are one. 'The sage remains and stands unmasked as *Paramatma*' is the meaning adopted. It is not an assertion of God's presence in the heart nor is it a statement of 'superior' Realization on the sage's part, but an enunciation of the sage standing *revealed* and *unveiled* as Parabrahman. Supporting this interpretation, Balgangadhara Tilak quotes a verse from Shanti Parva which speaks of क्षेत्रज्ञ being known as आत्मा when he is fettered by Matter, and as परमात्मा when the vestures of matter have been done away with. The verse quoted from Shanti Parva occurs in Chapter 187 (No. 23), the Edition with Neelakanta's commentary.

As to the sense attributed to the verse by Sankaracharya and Sankarananda, it may be observed that समाहित can hardly mean "identity with God". Literally, it denotes 'presence and proximity'. Nothing but the exigency of Adwaita can justify the enforced interpretation adopted as aforesaid. Mr. Tilak's quotation from Shanti Parva is for from conclusive. The verse quoted (No. 23) seems not be one found in all the manuscripts of the Mahabharata. It appears enclosed in brackets in the Kumbhakonam Edition (*Vide* page 295 of that Edition). Assuming that the verse is unexceptionable on any such ground, it may be seen that क्षेत्रज्ञ which is the most important word relied on to denote the Jeeva does not bear that meaning but means God in that context.

For, the next verse describes आत्मा and क्षेत्रज्ञ to be the "Source of Universal good" सर्वलोकहितात्मक, and the verse next after it uses the word *Jeeva* and calls 'Satwa, Rajas and Tamas,' as his qualities. It is obvious that the Jeeva is described here as an inferior Being affected by Matter, and क्षेत्रज्ञ, आत्मा and परमात्मा are terms applied to God, according as He directs and controls the Jeevas, bound or free. In chapter XIII, verse 2 of the Bhagavad Geeta, Sri Krishna calls Himself क्षेत्रज्ञ.

In these circumstances, it is right that we understand the text in its plain meaning. It makes perfect sense to take it as pointing out that the reward

of mental tranquillity is concentration of mind in God and the resulting God-vision.

That this plain Theistic meaning is most appropriate is confirmed by Sreedhara and Venkatanath who have adopted it without dissent.

Bhaskara changes the reading in the first line from “परमात्मासमाहितः” to “परात्मसु समा मतिः”. *Abhinava Guptacharya* of the *Adwaitic* school adopts this reading interprets it to mean that the sage “looks upon *other souls*, states of pleasure and pain, and states of honour and dishonour, *alike*”. As to this, it is to be noted that the reading of the text is the one universally adopted. The authority for *Bhaskara* and *Abhinava Guptacharya* to adopt a different reading is not clear. Nor does that reading commend itself by any superiority of sense. To *Abhinava Guptacharya*, the plural word परात्मसु ought to be disagreeable; for he believes not in plurality of *Atmans*. The notion of regarding all persons and conditions as equal is found repeated soon in verse No. 9 of this chapter. Hence redundancy cautions us against the change of reading.

Seeing that, in the verse under notice, the sense is not obvious or sound if the second line goes with the first line, some commentators have felt nervous over it and struggled hard to import words to bring out sense. *Sankaracharya* supplies the word ‘सम’ at the end of the verse so that his meaning is that ‘the sage is *indifferent* to states of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, and honour and dishonour’.

Ramanujacharya objects to the idea of any ellipsis and thinks that the second line qualifies जितात्मनः of the first line. The rendering then will be:— “He who has conquered his mind in the midst of heat and cold, pleasure and pain as well as honour and dishonour is, etc., etc.”

This interpretation limits and restricts the range of mental conquest that the sage is expected to compass. Sri Madhwa thinks that the second line of the verse goes with the next verse especially with the word कूटस्थ and not with the first line of the present verse at all.

According to him, the sense is complete in the first line itself and from the second line onwards in two and half verses, a new topic dealing with the characteristic virtues and qualities of the seer is taken up. It is not compulsory that the second line should be yoked only to the first line. It is quite admissible that it open a fresh topic. So understood, there is no ellipsis to be supplied as Sankaracharya thinks, nor is there any need to restrict the meaning of जितात्मनः as Ramanujacharya opines.

8) ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।

युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकांचनः॥

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा	...	the mind contented in general and special knowledge (or in knowledge and God-vision)
कूटस्थः	...	unshaken
विजितेन्द्रियः	...	of conquered senses
युक्तः	...	of accomplished Yoga
इति	...	thus
उच्यते	...	is called
योगी	...	the Yogin; the devotee
समलोष्टाश्मकांचनः	...	regarding the tile, stone and gold alike.

“He who is engaged in Yoga is deemed a person of accomplished *Yoga*, when he is contented in the happiness of knowledge, general and special (or knowledge and God –vision) when he is unshaken like *Akasa* (Space), when he has conquered the senses and when he looks upon a clod of earth, a stone, and a piece of gold alike.”

Further light is being thrown on the characteristics of the accomplished Yogin (योगारूढ). The point is being pressed home upon the aspirant again and again, that it is not external symbols or physical efforts that constitute Yoga, but spiritual fitness. The test is whether passion and prejudice have disappeared or not.

कूटस्थ is one who resembles *Akasa*. The simile indicates a state of total "unaffectedness". Amidst the countless vicissitudes of Nature, we see 'Akasa' (by which *Ether* or *Space* is meant) remaining stable and unmoved. So, the sage is expected to be cool and tranquil amidst the toils and turmoils of life. कूटस्थ is the predicate to be read with the second line of the previous verse. The meaning then is "that amidst pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, joys and griefs, honour and dishonour, the sage is tranquil like Akasa. "

This does not need any argument to make it clear. Where is the chance of any Yogin being established in Meditation, if hope and fear toss him about as the breeze revolves a weather-cock? It is a very high degree, indeed, of mental tranquillity that is denoted by the expression कूटस्थ. कूट has many a signification as the Lexicon shows. Among them, Sri Madhwa thinks that आकाश is the most appropriate here, as 'total unaffectedness' is the point meant to be emphasized.

Ramanujacharya takes कूटस्थ to mean "who stays in कूट". He takes कूट to signify the pure Atman, the Jeeva regarded independently of his sheaths of Matter. This interpretation accords with the trend of thought that this teacher pursue throughout, that to be established in Yoga is to be established in 'Self' (आत्मन्). Yoga is according to him, chiefly and primarily

a realization of the distinction between Matter and Spirit. With this idea prominently before him as the true and proper *Yoga*, कूट is by him interpreted as an allusion to 'Self'.

It is hard to see how कूट can mean the Atman. It is not one of its accepted significations. Desikar concedes this and thinks that the sense is deducible *figuratively*. He says that the soul is an unaffected Being, birthless, deathless, and changeless, to rely on the soul is to realize these characteristic features of the soul. He adds an alternative suggestion. कूट denotes a peak among other meanings. The sage is therefore one who stays, as it were, on the top of a mountain having soared aloft far above the region of the flesh and taken his stand on the Spirit.

It seems to me that *Vairagya* which is the most prominent topic of the teaching in question, is but indirectly based on the realized distinction between the *Body* and the *Soul*. It is all very well that we should not make the Charvaka's mistake of identifying the material body with the inner spirit. It is also, of course, important that we realize the spiritual essence and characteristics of the soul. But dispassion, disattachment and renunciation are not based on and obtained by this conviction alone. For instance, belief in God and a belief in sensuous pleasure being an impediment to salvation, are essential to *Vairagya*. Hence to harp on the 'self' as the pivot of the whole theology seems hardly right.

There are well-known texts of *Veda* which throw light on how the sage is expected to be an unaffected, कूटस्थ. They say:—“The sage shall, relying on the Great Abode, take his lodging under a tree, be content with a rag, remaining in solitude, deep in meditation, seeking God, contented, desireless, having subdued passions, undaunted by the tiger, the elephant, the lion or the serpent, and regardless of mosquito, the mungoose and the like.’ “He shall be unmoved like a tree which does not frown or tremble when it is cut; He shall be like a stone which does not frown or shake when chiselled; He shall be like *Akasa* which does not frown or shake when the air is rent. He shall rest on Truth.” (*Vide* quotations in Sanskrit.)

In ascending to Yoga of this high level, the text speaks of the steps in three epithets:-

- (i) To be contented in knowledge,
- (ii) To be a victor of the senses,
- (iii) To regard a brickbat, a stone, and God, alike.

(i) The reader must mark the distinction between ‘Gnana’ and ‘Vignana’ in which the sage is expected to be content. The said words have been variously explained (see, for instance, the various meanings of ज्ञान and विज्ञान mentioned on pages 759, 760 of Vol I of this book under chapter III, verse 41). ज्ञान denotes book-learning and विज्ञान denotes Realization or God-vision.

This is the interpretation of Sri Madhwa, and the commentators of the Advaitic school. Abhinava Guptacharya, however, thinks that विज्ञान is 'action' or कर्म. What it is to be content in or with karma as the characteristic of the sage has not been explained. Ramanujacharya thinks that ज्ञान denotes the minimum of knowledge which distinguishes *Matter* from *Spirit* and suffices for a moderately religious life whose aim is Swarga and the like. विज्ञान, according to him, sums up the entire knowledge of the soul, *in all its aspects of spirituality and bliss*, which is indispensable to the Mumukshu (aspirant to Moksha or Liberation).

In this exposition, ज्ञान and विज्ञान, according to this teacher, are both "*knowledge of the soul*", not "knowledge or realization of Brahman or God." A somewhat extraordinary distinction has been drawn between a lower and a higher aspirant, it being enough for the lower aspirant to acquire a partial knowledge of the soul, while the higher aspirant must know 'the soul' in all its aspects, features and traits. This distinction is neither intelligible nor well-founded. It is easy to see how this teacher harps on but one strain, *viz., Self-Realization* to the exclusion of all reference to God.

The text says, "content in ज्ञान and विज्ञान". If ज्ञान is such knowledge of the soul as is enough for an *Aspirant of Swarga*, how is he connected with the

present topic? Surely, he is not "a Yogin of accomplished Yoga". He is far from being a sage, his aim and ambition being low and sordid. He is a person strongly condemned and censured in many verses before (e.g., verses 42, 43, 44, chapter II).

Taking the words ज्ञान and विज्ञान literally, it is unobjectionable to understand the former to denote knowledge in a general way and the latter to signify knowledge of special character, i.e., knowledge in detail. Sri Madhwa thinks, therefore, that apart from God-vision, the said words may mean different degrees of knowledge relating to God. For this position and the other already stated, he quotes scriptural authority.

(ii) विजितेन्द्रियः is a well-known expression and requires no special comment.

(iii) समलोष्टश्मकांचनः is an expressive description. One who looks upon a clod of earth, on a stone, be it a granite or a diamond, and on gold, as of equal worth, is a true sage. No better test is required to identify him. There is hardly any one that we come across in this world of Mammon-worship who may be said to have banished greed and avarice wholly. Alas! the nugget of gold is the touchstone, rubbed against which, the baseness of professed greedlessness is but too often unmistakeably exposed.

9) सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीन-	Towards the well-wisher, the
मध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ...	friend, the evil-doer, the
	indifferent, the neutral, the foe
	and the relative
साधुषु	... towards good people
अपि च	... as also
पापेषु	... to the sinful
समबुद्धिः	... of equal attitude
विशिष्यते	... excels

“He excels who bears an equal attitude towards the well-wisher, the friend, the evil-doer, the indifferent, the neutral, the foe, the relative, the good as well as the sinful.”

In verse No.18, chapter V, we were told that wise men look equally on the Brahmin adorned with learning and humility, the cow, the elephant, the dog and the outcaste. The present verse is of similar import. Whereas the former treated of the seeker, the latter deals with the sage of established Yoga (योगारूढ).

The last preceding verse (No.8, chapter VI) ended by saying that the sage regards a clod of earth, a stone, and a nugget of gold alike. These are inanimate things. The present verse turns to the animate world and points out the sage's attitude towards the various kinds of men he has to deal with in society.

It is said that the sage bears an equal attitude towards all. It is necessary to see how and why such an attitude is advised.

(i) God is the Pervader of all. He works the Universe by taking numberless Forms. It is a mistake to differentiate between the 'Divine Forms' on the notion that some are superior and others inferior, some are perfect and others imperfect.

(ii) Friendship, hostility, neutrality, and kinship mark some of the relationships of man to man. Are they absolutely under our control? They are not. There is God, in them all, responsible for the conditions producing the said relation. For his own purposes, God brings us into contact with persons of various relative attitudes. The sage sees therein the hand of God the common worker (सम), and feels no worry: whereas the ignorant person excites himself under the same conditions in ignorance of God and His ways.

(iii) It may be seen that friendship, hostility, neutrality and kinship are not attributes of the soul. They are traceable no deeper than the Mind, mere accidents of external life not affecting the constitution and characteristics of the Spirit.

Being no more than impermanent and fitful states of the Flesh, the sage disregards them and looks to the soul within all, the ever luminous Atman endowed uniformly with the spiritual attributes of Sat, Chit, Ananda. In this connection, the belief of Madhwa about souls falling under three distinct groups is not to be forgotten. We believe in souls being grouped as Good, Bad and Mixed, so that no soul can, by any possibility, rise above or sink below his own group.

In considering all souls alike, the wise man does not, of course, ignore the distinctions running with the soul. He only brushes aside the outer crusts mentioned in the text.

(iv) The 'equality of attitude' spoken of in the text is not inconsistent with the position that the treatment accorded to people should vary with their deserts. The attitude contemplated is *equal* in the sense of being just. One who treats others just as they deserve is indeed a highly impartial person. On the other hand, it is not only improper but highly sinful to honor the unworthy and disregard the great.

Sri Madhwa has, in his Bhashya and Tatparya, drawn attention to these *four* chief aspects in which the lesson of 'equal of attitude' 'समबुद्धित्व' should be understood.

Ramanujacharya says that friends and foes, good men and bad, are none of them of any value or service to the sage. Having risen above ordinary conditions of social life, the sage of accomplished ends can now afford to look upon the inanimate and animate world with equal indifference.

Sankaracharya accounts for 'the equality of attitude' by pointing to the falsity of 'doership' and 'action'. The sage sees clearly that the true 'doer' is not the *Atman*. He feels that when any one does him wrong, the *Atman* of the wrong-doer is not responsible for it. So likewise, when any service is rendered. Hence it is right to look upon all alike

having regard to the inherent 'non-action' of the Atman. Sankarananda improves on this line of thought and touches on the unreality of 'the world of name and form' beneath which lies the Great Brahman the only *Verity* of the Universe. The sage overlooks and disregards the froth of 'Name and Form', which are the effects of illusion and regards all alike because all are but *Brahman*.

In the first line of the text, there are seven epithets, of which, excluding one, six resolve themselves into three pairs of virtual synonyms. The one word that is not paired, is वन्धु. Its meaning is clear as it denotes kinship of some sort by the tie of blood. Of the rest, सुहृत् and मित्र are virtually identical in import, denoting friendship. अरि and द्वेष्य denote 'enmity' उदासीन and मध्यस्थ denote indifference.

But to the deep student, there is distinction between the expressions composing each of the pairs. Sri Madhwa has quoted authority pointing out the distinguishing shades of thought.

For example, सुहृत् means the well-wisher who does good, unasked and unrequited. He does it disinterestedly and expects no return. मित्र is the friend that warns us of danger and gives us protection. अरि is an evil-doer. द्वेष्य is one who is so wicked by nature as to deserve only to be shunned. उदासीन is the indifferent individual who will not return good for

good or evil for evil but keeps stolidly unmindful. मध्यस्थ is the impartial person that has no malice and acts as he ought to, doing good where it is deserved, and evil, too, when called for.

Madhusoodana has thrown light on these pairs of epithets in his own way. It is not very important to pursue the examination of the various shades brought out. The broad line of thought is fairly clear.

A word more, especially as to the second line, may not be out of place. It says "Look on the *good* and the *wicked* alike". The reader will see that it is not right either for the sage or for the worldly-wise to do so. The requirements of law and ethics call for differentiation. Religion, too, upholds the distinction. What is meant, therefore, is that no personal malice ought to be harboured. We are expected to respect and revere the good and feel for the wicked. We have no right to look down on the wicked or hate them, except on the only ground that they are the enemies of God and His laws. Personally, they ought to be no foes of ours. We are not concerned with them except through their attitude towards God, Religion and Morality.

10) योगी युंजीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥

योगी

... the aspirant of Meditation

युंजीत

... let (him) apply to Meditation

सततं	... constantly
आत्मानं	... the Mind
रहसि	... in secrecy
स्थितः	... staying
एकाकी	... alone
यतचित्तात्मा	... with mind, senses and body, restrained
निराशीः	... desireless
अपरिग्रहः	... unburdened

“Let the aspirant apply his mind to Meditation constantly, staying in secrecy and remaining in solitude, with his mind and body restrained, Desireless and Unencumbered.”

From this verse till No.36, we have an exposition of *Dhyanayoga*. In verses 27 and 28 of chapter V we had a reference to this very briefly. The same is taken up again for fuller treatment.

In verses 1 to 9 of this chapter (No.VI), *Karmayoga* was adverted as an important step towards ध्यानयोग. It was therefore somewhat prefatory in character. Now we are being taught the science and art of Meditation in broad outline.

However hard we may try to control the Mind, it gets the better of us and strays away. To turn it back from the external world and make it face and look inward is a task of great labour and persever-

ance. It requires constant practice and unceasing attention. सततं in the text emphasizes this point. आत्मानं means the Mind, not the self. It is the Mind that plays the truant and vagabond. It is the Mind that persists in looking outward in spite of efforts to the contrary. It is, therefore, the Mind that we should catch hold of and compel to turn its back on the outer world and look inward. .

The practitioner of Meditation should choose a secret spot and be *alone*. He is liable to be disturbed if he practises Meditation in a public place or in company. If he be not alone but allows a wife or a son or a friend, he will have no chance at all for introspection. They will soon lead him into domestic cares or beguile him with the wind and the weather, or the news of the world. Poor soul! He is not yet an adept to resist this. Hence he is advised not to allow himself the doubtful privilege and pleasure of company. Nay more, in order to prevent the possibility of intrusion, he is asked to *select* a *secret* spot. Unless he does so, curiosity will bring down visitors to his cave who will plague him with inquiries. Hence the Lord uses the word रहसि which denotes *secrecy* rather than solitude.

Be the place ever so *secret* and ever so *solitary*, if the person lets his Mind wander and allows the senses to play their pranks, the *external* solitude is of no value whatever. The advice is therefore given that the *Mind* and the *Body* should be kept under restraint. आत्मा in यतचित्तात्मा is the *Body*.

This restraint is impossible unless *Desire* is abandoned. We have had many a lesson on this.

Going into solitude for Meditation, the Yogin will be very imprudent in burdening himself with goods and cares (परिग्रहाः). Not infrequently, we see 'sadhus' sedulously hoarding coins and surrounding themselves with comforts and luxuries. These, obviously, are burdens and must seriously impede the task of the Yogin and defeat his purpose.

In Advaitic commentaries, the Yogin contemplated here is said to be the 'Ascetic' (संन्यासी). It is pointed out by Utkarsha Deepika that the reference to *secrecy* and *solitude* makes this clear.

I do not see why the 'Aspirant of Meditation' should necessarily be an ascetic. Secrecy and solitude are no monopolies of the 'Ascetic' technically so called. Hence Desikar objects to the narrowed construction suggested.

The Yoga Sootras of Patanjali deal with the science and art of Yoga in a masterly work of about 200 aphorisms. But the system is not one founded by him. Very likely, he borrowed the chief ideas from works like the Bhagavad Geeta and stringed them up more systematically than had been done before. Patanjali is a great Dualist. *Prakriti*, *Purusha* and God are three distinct entities he firmly holds to. Moksha is the result of realizing *Purusha*'s distinctness from *Prakriti*.

The Yoga Sastra of Patanjali bears on the point of ध्यानयोग intimately. It may be of interest and value to compare the ideas that run on parallel lines and study the analogy.

चित्तं, Chitta, which is a comprehensive term for the *Mind*, the *Ahamkara* and *Buddhi*, works in two planes, the Emotional and the Intellectual. On the Emotional plane, it causes pleasure and pain. This should be prevented by Yoga. On the Intellectual plane, it works in various ways to produce (1) true perceptions, (2) false perceptions, (3) hallucinations, (4) sleep and (5) memory (Yoga Sutras, Chapter I, 6).

Dispassion and *constant Practice* are the chief means of preventing the said operations of Chitta (I, 12).

In consequence of unchecked tendencies, Chitta (चित्तं) brings on Afflictions (क्लेशाः) and Distractions (विक्षेपाः). The object of Karmayoga is to check them. The aspirant is advised to love his fellows and love God. His character and conduct should be high.

To bring about a high level of life and lead to concentration, eight accessories (अष्टाङ्गयोग) have been laid down. They are:—

(i) यम, *Restraint*. The advice is 'be moral'. These may be subdivided:—(a) do not kill or injure any one; (b) be kind to all; speak and act truth; (c) steal not

(comprehensively understood); (d) practise continence and celibacy; (e) give up covetousness.

(ii) नियम, *Niyama*. (a) Be clean in body and mind; (b) be contented; (c) practise austerity; (d) engage in study; (e) be devoted to God.

It is said that, while practicing Yama and Niyama, the wrong tendency should be checked by thinking of the opposite. For example, if the desire be strong to tell a lie, we should think at once of the opposite, namely, the beauty of truthfulness — chapter II, verse 33.

(iii) आसन, Posture; steady and easy.

(iv) प्राणायाम, Regulation of Breaths.

(v) प्रत्याहार, Abstraction; withdrawal of senses; their inhibition: a condition in which the wakeful Yogin will not, for example, hear a gun fired close by.

These five are external accessories. Now we proceed to the internal.

(vi) (Chapter III of Patanjali) धारणा, concentration.

(vii) ध्यान *continued* mental effort in concentration.

(viii) समाधि. This is *developed* ध्यान when the object of Meditation shines out alone. Nos. 6, 7 & 8 are collectively known as संयम.

In describing the mental state of Samadhi, Basu says: (*Vide* page 9 of his Preface to Patanjali Sootras translated) "The molecules of the mental body are thrown in a very high state of vibration, though the body in all appearance is in perfect calm. This vibration of the molecules of the mental body becomes by practice, rhythmic and this rhythmic flow is the mental peace of Samadhi.

The swing of the vibration lies between one-pointedness and all-pointedness, between the concentration to a point and expansion to embrace a whole universe. That which appears to be the stillness of *Samadhi* is perhaps the highest activity possible. Even what is called one-pointedness is itself a state of utmost activity. When the Mind is one-pointed, it does not mean that one idea is indelibly impressed on the Mind like an engraving on a stone, but that the mind is working so quickly that the image of one is formed in no time, as it were, destroyed in no time, as it were, and formed again.

This quick succession of the same form is one-pointedness. In ordinary states, one idea is followed by another idea. In one-pointedness, the same idea vanishes and re-appears again and again. Thus what is called fixing the mind to a thought is really making mind reproduce one thought over and over again, in the utmost quickness of succession, without the intrusion of any foreign thought."

It is not necessary to go into further details. The whole system is a masterly exposition of the noumena

and the phenomena of the Atman and the Mind, and amply repays perusal.

In understanding the Geeta, light may be usefully derived from parts of Patanjali's exposition. Sri Krishna emphasizes *Karmayoga* as a step towards ध्यान (*Vide* verses 1 to 9 especially chapter VI). This corresponds to Chapter II, Sootra (1) of Patanjali, *viz.*, तपस्स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः "Purificatory action, study, and making God the motive of action is the Yoga of action."

Coming to the text under comment, the advice, 'सततं आत्मानं युजीत', 'apply the mind constantly to Yoga', reminds one of the Patanjali's aphorism about the necessity of constant practice (*Vide* Chapter I, S. 12-13). 'Vairagya' strongly advocated in Chapter I, S. 12-15-16 of Patanjali has been largely dwelt on by Sri Krishna throughout and is succinctly referred to in the text in the word निराशीः. The external *accessories of Yoga* यम and the remaining four, find an implied mention in अपरिग्रह this being the subdivision of यम in particular.

The *accessories* known as संयम consisting of धारणा, ध्यान, and समाधि are found referred to in the brief expression यतचित्तात्मा.

This psychology is more ancient than Patanjali. The main principles were obviously well-known be-

fore. Even in Kathopanishad reference occurs to ध्यानयोग here and there, e.g., Part VI, Mantra 11,— “तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणां” “The firm control of the senses is regarded as Yoga.”

An important point of distinction between Patanjali and true Vedanta should be drawn attention to in this connection.

No doubt, Patanjali does conclude the importance of God in Yoga. (*Vide* Chapter I, Sootra 23) which says “ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा,” which means “Or by relying on God.” The idea is that trance becomes speedier of attainment either by Reliance on God or by various other means such as practice, dispassion, etc.” This reluctant concession in favour of God as an alternative is not satisfactory. Patanjali thinks that the Yogin may choose God or anything else he pleases for concentration and the result would, in his opinion, be the same.

Moreover, the realization, which leads to the goal is, according to Patanjali, *Self-Realization*. He thinks that the point is to know the *Jeeva* from the non-soul. Sri Madhwa, however, allots the utmost importance to God at every stage and step. In the Geeta text युंजीतात्मानं means, according to him, that the Mind should be forced and turned towards God.

Although Ramanujacharya agrees that Patanjali is *unvedantic* and unacceptable (*vide*, e.g., Desikar under verse 39, chapter II, the Bhagavad Geeta), he

seems to have profusely borrowed his notion of the 'goal' from Patanjali. Hence in Chapter II and throughout, he lays the greatest emphasis on 'Self-Realization' which means, according to him and Patanjali 'the knowledge that the individual soul is different from Prakriti.' Ramanujacharya sticks to "Self-Realization" with such tenacity as to construe even the word परमात्मा in verse 7 of Chapter VI to mean the Jeeva. Now in the Geeta text under comment, here therefore interprets युंजीत to mean that the 'aspirant should cause the Atman to be fixed in the Atman itself' (स्वदर्शननिष्ठं कुर्वीत.) Raghavendra Swamin, the author of Vivriti, rightly differs from this and says that the concentration of thought contemplated here is focusing the mind on God.

11) शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥

12) तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥

शुचौ	...	pure
देशे	...	in place
प्रतिष्ठाप्य	...	fixing
स्थिरं	...	firm

आसनं	...	seat
आत्मनः	...	one's own
नात्युच्छ्रितं	...	not very high
नातिनीचं	...	nor very low
चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरं	...	over cloth, skin and kusa-grass
तत्र	...	there
एकाग्रं	...	one-pointed
मनः	...	mind
कृत्वा	...	causing
यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः	...	with the activities of the mind and the senses restrained
उपविश्य	...	sitting
आसने	...	on seat
युज्यात्	...	will practise
योगं	...	the Yoga of Meditation
आत्मविशुद्धये	...	for mental purity or salvation of self

"In a pure spot, fixing his own seat firm, neither too high nor too low, with a cloth, a skin, and a kusa-mat put on, he will sit on the seat and cause the mind to be one-pointed. So shall he practise the Yoga of Meditation with the activities of the Mind and the senses restrained for the sake of mental purity (or redemption of self)".

The aspirant is introduced into the practice of Meditation and the initial steps are pointed out. The

end is mentioned as आत्मविशुद्धि. It means “*the purity of mind*” that is the proximate result of Yogic life, or ‘salvation’ the final goal.

The restraint spoken of in यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रिय is not new. It is the same as यतचित्तात्मा of the foregoing verse. It is repeated for the sake emphasis. The point is that holy region, firm seat, deer-skins and kusa, will not bring about Meditation until self-control is a *fait accompli*.

युज्याद्योगं “shall practise Meditation.” This too means the same thing as योगीयुंजीत of the last verse and युक्त आसीत मत्परः of the ensuing verse 14. From this, it is fairly clear that the Mind, in being one-pointed, is to be neither a vacuum nor focussed on *any* object it may choose, but must be addressed to and focussed on God. Ramanujacharya says here also that the advice is to ‘vision the self’; आत्मावलोकनं (self-realization). Here, the strong inclination to the *unvedantic* goals enunciated by Sankhya and Patanjali is in evidence.

As a material aid to Yoga, the text exhorts the aspirant to adopt the sitting posture (उपविश्यासने). In Brahma Sootras, Adhyaya IV, Aphorism 7-8-9-10 and 11 deal with the importance of this posture “sitting” as a material help of Yoga. Aphorism No.7 (आसीनस्संभवात्) says “He shall sit, because *only then* is meditation possible without disturbance.” No.8

(ध्यानाच्च) says "This is for Meditation" as distinguished from merely flashing thoughts and memories of God. The latter is possible in any posture: but Meditation, implying, as it does, a prolonged, uninterrupted, succession of the concentrated image, is achievable only in the sitting posture. No.9 (अचलत्वं चापेक्ष्य) says that "the great point to be secured is the motionless steadiness of the body." A great may be achieved by restraining the senses and breaths, but unless one *sits* down, the body is not fixed into motionless steadiness. No.10 says स्मरन्तिच by which reference made to the authority of Smritis like the Geeta text under comment. No. 11 'यत्रैकाग्रता तत्राविशेषात्' winds up by saying that other rules of minute observance such as the holy spot, holy time and so on, are comparatively unimportant, the vital requisite being that the conditions and environments chosen should be such as to conduce to mental peace and satisfaction.

Patanjali deals with 'seat' as an important accessory (अंग) of Yoga. He defines it as स्थिरसुखमासनं chapter II, verse 46. The following are some of the well-known names of 'sitting' varieties.

- (i) Padmasana is where the legs are folded पद्मासन into each other so as to look like an out-spread lotus.
- (ii) Virasana is 'that in which a sitting man has one foot in contact with the ground and

बीरासन places the other over the partially inclined knee'. (Basu.)

- (iii) Bhadrasana is 'that in which the sitting man place the soles of both feet joined together below the testicles and places भद्रासन both hands with the fingers interlaced over that region'. (Basu.)
- (iv) Swastika is 'that in which the left foot is placed a little downward inclined between the स्वस्तिक right thigh and shank, and the right foot is placed in a similar position between the left thigh and shank'. (Basu.)
- (v) Dandasana 'is practised by sitting with thighs shanks and feet, stretched straight along दण्डासन the ground with the ankles, joined together, but the toes kept apart'. (Basu.)
- (vi) Paryanka is 'that in which the knees are पर्यंक extended and the arms are used to lie upon'. (Basu.)
- (vii) Sopasraya is 'that in which the tiger's skin or सोपाश्रय deer skin or some cloth is used to sit upon'. (Basu.)
- (viii) क्रौंचासन, (ix) हस्तिनिषदन and (x) उष्ट्रनिषदन are imitations of the sitting postures of the Krouncha

Bird, the elephant and the camel.

(xi) समसंस्थान is 'that in which the feet are so placed that the heels and foreparts of both are joined together with the feet little bent.' (Basu.)

(xii) स्थिरसुखं is whatever posture that may secure steadiness and ease. It is also known as यथासुखं.

It may be seen that Patanjali's aphorism does not lay down any one of the first eleven 'Postures' as of any special importance. He approves of No.12 by name, and his meaning is that the Yogin is free to select any posture he pleases, provided that he does not lose sight of the objects in view, viz., to obtain ease and steadiness.

Thus the Brahma Sootras and Patanjali agree in the main that 'sitting' is an essential auxiliary and that other details such as divisions of posture, selection of place and time &c., are only of subordinate importance.

In the Geeta text, the Lord uses the general word उपविश्य (sitting) and does not go into any details of Posture such as Padmasana etc. This accords with the view of Brahma Sootra and Patanjali.

Reverting to the text under notice, in verse No.11, advice is given about (1) the suitability of the spot and (2) the seat. This is to be regarded as advisory rather than as imperative.

1. शुचौ देशे. That a holy region and a clean spot is important goes without saying. The object being mental satisfaction, an unclean spot or neighbourhood is, if coarse, to be avoided.

2. स्थिरमासनं. The seat should be firm and strong. The reason is obvious.

3. आत्मनः. The seat should be *one's own*. This follows the saying in Smritis that a man's seat, bed, clothing, wife, child and drinking bowl, are pure to himself and impure to others."

4. नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं. is an advice of common sense. A seat that is too high or too low is beset with inconvenience and discomfort. The former may lead to tumbling and the latter may attract ants and vermin.

5. चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरं. The Yogin will make the seat comfortable and holy. *Kusa* grass is more for the sake of sanctity than comfort. The skin of the tiger or the deer is for both purposes. It is soft and warm and is deemed pious also. The cloth (चैल) is for softness, chiefly.

It may be noted that 'the Postures' enumerated above under Patanjali's aphorism No.7 (सोपाश्रय) relates to the seat being provided with the accessories of *skin* and *cloth*. Ramanujacharya uses the word सोपाश्रय in connection with his note on this Geeta text. Hence

it is not unlikely that Sri Krishna means to commend this kind of seat especially for adoption if otherwise suited.

The text says "cloth, skin and Kusa put on." Some difference of opinion has been expressed as to the order in which these three things should be arranged. Sankaracharya thinks that above the seat, Kusa is the first thing to be laid, then should be placed the skin, and next to it i.e., at the top, should be the cloth—this being the softest, and, therefore, the most suitable to be in contact with the man.

Desikar thinks that there is no ground for reversing the order, as Sankaracharya thinks, but that the cloth, skin and Kusa are to be laid one above another, the *Kusa* being at the top. Others, however, take it that no particular order or arrangement of the layers is meant at all, the Yogin being allowed to choose as he pleases for the sake of the maximum ease and steadiness derivable under the circumstance.

These auxiliaries being secured, the Yogin will be seated and then cause his mind to be 'one-pointed', एकाग्रं. I have already shewn that to be 'one-pointed' does not, obviously, means mental vacuity. It means that the mind is focussed on a centre of gravity ought to be no other than God.

In Patanjali's system एकाग्रता is a technical term denoting the fourth of five stages named. They count (i) क्षिप्र (2) मूढ, (3) विक्षिप्त, (4) एकाग्र and (5) निरुद्ध as the

five gradations of mental state marking its progress towards Samadhi. क्षिप्त is the state of excessive activity induced by *Rajas* quality. मूढत्व is the lethargy of तामस. No. 3 is where the *Rajas* quality has being largely reduced and mental steadiness is occasionally experienced. No. 4, एकाग्रता, is where *Rajasa* and *Tamasa* have been largely expelled and 'one-pointedness' is within reach. No. 5 is the highest condition, the trance. Of these, Nos. 1, 2 and 3 hardly deserve to be termed yoga. Nos. 4 and 5 deserve that name. Hence the Geeta text says "एकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा" meaning that the Yogin in question being firmly and duly "seated" should practise एकाग्रता and finally निरोध 'which is true. योग (Vide Patanjali, योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः I, 2 and see गीता, युंज्याद्योगं).

13) समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।

संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥

14) प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारि त्रिते स्थितः ।

मनस्संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥

समं ... erect

कायशिरोग्रीवं ... the body, the head and the neck

धारयन् ... holding

अचलं	... motionless
स्थिरः	... steady
संप्रेक्ष्य	... gazing at
नासिकाग्रं	... the tip of the nose
स्वं	... one's own
दिशः	... the quarters
च	... and
अनवलोकयन्	... not seeing
प्रशान्तात्मा	... of tranquil mind
विगतभीः	... fearless
ब्रह्मचारिव्रते	... in the austerity of the Brahmacharin (bachelor).
स्थितः	... staying firm
मनः	... the mind
संयम्य	... controlling
मच्चित्तः	... thinking of Me
युक्तः	... the Yogin
आसीत	... shall sit
मत्परः	... Believer in My Supremacy

13. "Holding the body, the head, and the neck erect, being motionless and steady, gazing at the point of the nose and not looking at the quarters."

14. "Tranquil in mind, fearless, fixed in the austerity of the Brahmacharin, of controlled mind,

let the Yogin sit, thinking of *Me* and trusting in *My* supremacy.”

Here is further advice about posture and other initial matters connected with the beginner's practice.

(i) Irrespective of the posture, it is laid down as a condition precedent that the aspirant should be firm in the vow of the Brahmacharin. It is not meant, of course, that he should be a person in the *Asrama* technical, bearing that name; nor need he be engaged in the observance of the minute relating thereto. But in spirit he should be a Brahmacharin. Celibacy is a very essential condition of this life. Study and cogitation are its important characteristics. Purity and cleanliness are its indispensable features. The aspirant is expected in all these matters to be a bachelor in spirit.

Sankarananda thinks that the aspirant under notice is an *ascetic* belonging to the Fourth *Asrama*. He therefore thinks that the ब्रह्मचर्य 'bachelorship' spoken of is to be confined to the single point of mendicancy which is a common feature of the bachelor and the ascetic. According to him, the aspirant should give a wide berth to all the other engagements of the bachelor such, for instance, as study, bath thrice a day, and so on. In his view, these will impede and destroy the 'knowledge of non dualism' he aspires for or has attained.

In this construction, Sankarananda goes very

much beyond Sankaracharya. The latter understands 'bachelorship' more literally and instances the *service of a Preceptor* as well as the food of mendicancy among the observances. His annotator Anandagiri goes further and instances other observances such as "*the three-time bath.*" Thus Sankarananda's fear of the Yogin risking his non-dualism' by a course of fully-lived bachelor's life is not shared by his brethren.

Desikar explains ब्रह्मचर्य as a technical term for celibacy. He quotes Agneya verses (repeated also in Brihaspati) to the effect that the *lover* is one that thinks highly of the fair sex, fondles her in memory, talks of her, indulges in dalliance, gazes at and talks to her in secret, longs for her, makes up his mind and achieves ." These are named the अष्टांग of love. The Brahmacharin is just the reverse of the *Lover*, being free from every one of the eight pursuits aforementioned.

(ii) Qualified by ब्रह्मचर्य truly and liberally understood, the aspirant is told to enter on Yoga. He has been asked already to choose a pure spot and take his seat firmly. The next step is to hold his body, neck and head, quite erect and steady. To keep oneself quite motionless in insisted on in Brahma Sootra too 'अचलत्वं चापेक्ष्य' quoted under verses 11 and 12 of this chapter. If the body, the neck and the head, are not held erect but allowed to droop loose, the effect will be one of laziness and languor.

But what the aspirant seeks for is not languor but a kind of hypnotism in which the mind is to be screwed up for meditation, which means activity of a most intense and acute degree. After the body is held erect and steady, the next step for inducing the 'trance' is to look fixedly at the tip of '*one's own nose*' so intently as to withdraw the eyes altogether from the four quarters of the compass.

Commenting on the instruction 'to look at the point of the nose', Sankaracharya takes the meaning to be that the aspirant should *seem* to be looking at the nose and not actually do so. But if he actually does so, the risk will be that he will turn out a 'Meditator of the Nose' rather than a 'Meditator of Brahman' as he seeks to be. Hence, in the text, the little word इव should be read with संप्रेक्ष्य. So opines this commentator.

It seems to me that there is no ground for the fear and the risk set out as the reason for not taking the Geeta text literally. The aspirant is being taught the A, B, C, of the Yoga practice and is told how to sit and what to do by way of external accessories. This is not 'Meditation' but only the outer door. They keep the eyes shut will induce sleep. To keep them wide open will lead to diversion. The advice therefore is to observe the golden mean and keep the eyes half open. In this condition, if the gaze be fixed severely on a point no grosser or farther than the tip of the nose, the result will be a quickly induced hypnotic trance.

Hence there is no question of the aspirant turning out a 'Meditator of the Nose' in any event. The exhortation to look fixedly at the nose is the same thing, in other words, as the advice in verse No. 27 of chapter V which speaks of the "gaze fixed between the eyebrows." There is no charm, of course either in the 'nose' or the 'eyebrows' by themselves. The Lord carefully adds स्वं, 'one's own', as an epithet of 'the nose'. The point is, as explained just now, that a fixed gaze on a fine little object very closely situated has a particular psychological effect. The Lord means that, for this purpose, the Yogin should fix his look on the nose and not merely *seem* to do so.

(iii) Turning next to mental attitudes, we are told that the Yogin should be quite *fearless*. A dread of loneliness is, of course, fatal. So is *fear* of tigers, serpents, or beasts. He has deliberately chosen a lonely spot. Unless his trust in a Protecting Providence is perfect, he has no chance of pursuing the Yoga practice to any advantage. The phrases 'मच्चित्तः' and 'मत्परः' throw light on this point. It is not rashness but a strong unshakeable faith in God who may be trusted to enveil the devotee under His protection.

Sankarananda explains 'fearlessness' in his own way. The Yogin being an *ascetic*, who attends to no work except satisfying hunger and answering nature, may incur the odium of the public, wise and unwise. He is here advised not to pay heed to any such odium or censure but 'fearlessly' to give up all duties, obligations and observances, however strongly en-

joined by the Shastras. This interpretation is both unnecessary and unsound for obvious reasons. The Lord is dealing with the aspirant who is not yet an adept. He expects of him a well-lived life of *Brahmacharya*. When the Yogin is not actually in trance, he is certainly sound to do duties and fear such public censure as he may rightly incur from wrong omissions and commissions. That Sankarananda's interpretation is *unnecessary* is clear from the alternative explanation already given which is in harmony with reason and the text.

(iv) At the end of verse No. 14, we have two very important phrases मच्चित्तः and मत्परः. The distinction between them has to be noted.

मच्चित्तः denotes devotion to God and मत्परः points to the devotee's belief in the Supremacy of God. No true devotion to God is possible without a firm faith in His supremacy and Greatness.

In the world, we see that affection and reverence are not always centred on the same object. We *love* our wives but we *respect* the King. In the case of God, He is to be the object of our affection as well as adoration. It is this combination that is meant to be emphasized by the two expressions मच्चित्तः and मत्परः. This is the view of Vivriti as also of Sankaracharya.

Madhusoodana differs slightly from Sankaracharya, for which he takes care duly to apologize. The variation does not seem very impor-

tant. He renders मत्पर to mean 'devoted to God whom the devotee looks upon as the highest bliss.'

It is Sankarananda that darts off here on an original tract of his own. While every one of the commentators thinks that the first person pronoun in मच्चित्त and मत्पर refers to the speaker *Sri Krishna*, as it naturally does, Sankarananda takes मत् in मच्चित्त alone to refer to Sri Krishna and construes मत् in मत्परः to signify the *devotee* himself. He states the result thus: "The devotee shall be devoted to Me (God) मच्चित्तः. By this, it is not meant that the devotee and God are *distinct*; because they are truly speaking, one and the same. Hence the devotee shall be मत्पर. That is to say he will regard *himself* as पर the Great Brahman".

This seems to me 'non-dualism' with a vengeance. Of two phrases मच्चित्त and मत्पर in juxtaposition, with मत् appearing both, one admittedly alludes to Sri Krishna while the other is supposed to signify the devotee's own insignificant *Self*. They does not accord with reasonable canons of construction.

All the other brethren of Adwaitic School are here agree that the reference in both the phrases is to God, and they see no allusion herein to 'non-dualism'. Venkatanatha has waxed eloquent here over the Divinely beautiful picture of Sri Krishna, the Lovely, contemplated ardently by the devotee. To

my mind, the spirit of religious fervour roused by मच्चित्त is seriously marred and even effaced by मत्पर if understood as Sankarananda has done.

No doubt 'मत्पर' is an expression that is often used in the Geeta (*Vide e.g.*, chapter II, verse 61.) In this last mentioned verse (II-61), no doubt, the interpretation of most members of the Sankara School is like that of Sankarananda. The inappropriateness of doing so has been there pointed out. In the present text, the two expression मच्चित्त and मत्पर appear together, and all but Sankarananda concur in the propriety of taking God as the Being referred to in both the said expressions.

On the subject of Meditation, the reader will now and again compare Sri Krishna's teachings with Patanjali's and note points of similarity and divergence. On the teaching emphasized by मच्चित्त: and मत्पर: here, it seems to me that Patanjali hardly lays sufficient stress. In aphorism 45, chapter II, Patanjali says समाधिसिद्धिरीश्वरप्रणिधानात् "The attainment of trance is achieved by making Iswara the motive of-all-actions." At first, this looks like a truly theistic exhortation similar to the Geeta. But it is not so. In chapter I, Aph. 39, Patanjali gives leave to the meditator choosing any object he pleases to think upon; 'यथाभिध्यानाद्वा' meaning "or by meditating according to one's own predilection."

Chapter II, Aph. 45, which speaks of Iswara, treats *Devotion to God* as only one out of five *sub-accessories* forming divisions of नियम. Vide chap. II, Aph.32. The aphorism runs to this effect. “शौचसन्तोषतपस्स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः” “The नियमs are cleanliness, contentment, purificatory action, study, and the making of the Lord the motive-of-all-action.”

It is to be remembered that in Patanjali's scheme नियम is merely an external accessory (बहिरङ्ग) that is one of the lowest rungs of the ladder. Its position is even below आसन.

Moreover, II-45 has been explained by Patanjali's commentator thus, “The faculty of trance becomes perfect in him who *dedicates all his powers to Iswara*. By this, he knows all that he desires to know, just as it is in reality, in another place, an another body or at another time. Then his intellect knows everything as it is.” The commentary makes it quite clear that the purpose served by Devotion is the attainment of psychic powers (अणिमा&c.) such as prophetic vision, clairaudience, etc.

On the other hand, the trend of the Geeta teaching is to enthrone true Devotion as virtually the *be-all* and *end-all* of Meditation, because it is the only means of God-vision and the abiding after-result too of God-vision. According to the Bhagavad Geeta, Samadhi is conceivable without God as the central point and goal of Meditation.

15) युंजन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥

युंजन्	... Uniting
एवं	... thus
सदा	... always
आत्मानं	... the mind
योगी	... The Yogin
नियतमानसः	... of controlled mind
शान्तिं	... Moksha, Liberation
निर्वाणपरमां	... supervening the extinction of Body
मत्संस्थां	... the state of being in Me
अधिगच्छति	... attains

“The Yogin of controlled Mind who unites the mind thus (with God), attains the Liberation which supervenes the extinction of the *Body*.”

The first line of this verse is a recapitulation for the purpose of stating the conclusion adverted to in the second line.

In describing salvation (शान्ति) two epithets have been used namely (1) निर्वाणपरमां and (2) मत्संस्थां. The reader will please note their significance.

निर्वाणपरमां has been translated above into "Supervening the extinction of the body". It is not unusual to speak of the Seer's condition as जीवन्मुक्ति. In the system of Non-Dualism, it is the state of the Seer who has realized Unity. In Dualism, it is the blissful condition of the Sage who has *visioned* God. He is styled a जीवन्मुक्त because he has not yet given up the mortal body. It may be that his Prarabdha compels him to suffer more re-births. At the end, however, when the liability of re-birth is gone, he ascends to his abode as an Emancipate. This is विदेहकैवल्यं, a state of unalloyed bliss after he has completely shaken off the worry of physical encasement. निर्वाण is the condition of 'being free from Body.' परम refers to the time subsequent to that freedom.

Sankarananda agrees in this interpretation of निर्वाण.

मत्संस्थां seems to be an inconvenient word for the doctrine of Non-Dualism. Sri Krishna describes Mukti to be "the state of being *in Him*." This is at variance with Non-Dualism for two reasons; *viz.*, (1) Sri Krishna is only the Lower Brahman, a mere Iswara. "To be in the Lower Brahman" is a matter of no consequence, for the goal is not that; (2) Taking मत् here to stand for the higher Brahman, even then, "to be in Para Brahman" is not the goal; for the end is *unity* with Brahman and not to rest *in or upon Brahman*.

Sankaracharya construes मत्संस्थां to mean मदधीनां meaning "under My Power". What this means is not clear. He surely cannot mean that Mukti is a *gift* of the Lower or Higher Brahman.

His commentator Anandagiri therefore adds the gloss that his master's idea is that Mukti is "Unification with Sri Krishna" who apparently stands here for the higher Brahman. Neelakanta follows the same course.

Sri Madhwa takes the word मत्संस्था literally, and, in his system, there is no difficulty whatever. Mukti is, according to him, a condition of blissful liberty in the proximity of God.

This word मत्संस्था represents the Vedantic idea of Liberation as distinguished from that of Patanjali. Commenting on this verse, Madhusoodana has a very long note minutely defining, distinguishing, grouping, and analysing the technicalities of Patanjali. Up to the penultimate stage, the description in Patanjala may be acceptable as a pure matter of Psychology. But at the end, Patanjali is not approved of by Vedantins. His view of God is not Vedic. His views about the "object of Meditation" in the trance are not acceded to. He does not say that Mukti is the condition it is described to be in the schools of Non-Dualism or Dualism. Taking the various words and phrases of the Geeta text one after another, Madhusoodana finds, for each, its equivalent in Patanjali's *technique* and, coming to मत्संस्था at the end, finds no correspond-

ing equivalent for it. He therefore says मत्संस्था is the approved goal of the Upanishads. In this, we certainly agree, although Madhusoodana and Dualists do not see, eye to eye, as to what the Upanishadic doctrine itself is on the point. It is, however, common ground that मत्संस्था represents a doctrine of Liberation different from what Patanjali holds up as the goal and the ideal.

16) नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।

न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥

17) युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥

न	... not
अत्यश्नतः	... to the over-eater
तु	... but
योगः	... Yoga—the life of Meditation
अस्ति	... exists; suits
न च	... nor
एकान्तं	... wholly
अनश्नतः	... to the non-eater
न च	... Nor

अतिस्वप्नशीलस्य ...	to one indulging too much in sleep
जाग्रतः ...	waking too much
न ...	not
एव, च ...	and only
अर्जुन ...	O! Arjuna
युक्ताहारविहारस्य ...	of regulated food and recreation
युक्तचेष्टस्य ...	of regulated exertion
कर्मसु ...	in work
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य...	of regulated sleep and wakefulness
योगः ...	Yoga
भवति ...	becomes
दुःखहा ...	a destroyer of pain

16. "But Yoga is not for one who eats too much or who abstains altogether. Nor is it for one who is addicted too much to sleep or to one who is only too wakeful, O! Arjuna."

17. "Yoga becomes the destroyer of pain to one whose food and recreation, whose exertion in work, and whose sleep and wakefulness, are regulated."

Verse No. 59, chapter II, taught us that fasting destroys the power of enjoying pleasures, but not the relish. Under that verse it was pointed out that, in some persons, *fasting* kills the sensing capacity of all the senses (eye, ear, touch, taste and smell) and

leaves the *relish* alone unconquered. In others, the capacity and the relish of the eye, the ear, the touch and the smell alone, are smothered by fast, but not the *capacity* and the *relish* of the tongue. We need not dwell on this distinction here. Our present point is to note how great is the efficacy and power of '*fasting*' for the achievement of self-control. There can be doubt that by means of abstinence more or less wholesale, it is not impossible to subdue the senses.

But to fast wholesale is most impracticable. Life itself we be at stake, if one attempts the experiment on a large scale. Hence verse No. 61, chapter II, furnished an alternative and taught us that *Divine Meditation* was a powerful substitute in the place of *fasting*. The efficacy and importance of Divine Meditation was recalled prominently to memory in verse No. 14 of the present chapter by the phrases मच्चित्तः and मत्परः

Thus we see, if one can stand it, it is desirable that he should fast and abstain, within the limits of endurance. A passage in Naradeeya Purana (quoted in the Sanskrit Work) says "abandoning sleep, food, fear, breath, work and indolence, one should meditate with eyes half-open."

To one who is physically incapable of prolonged abstinence, it might seem then that Yoga is an impossibility. Sri Krishna says that it is not so. He points out that a life of well-regulated work, food and rest, may also accomplish Yoga.

The verses under comment deal with this point in the negative and positive aspects. The disaster brought on by excessive indulgence and abstinence, is first drawn attention to. Next, we are told how agreeably profitable is the golden mean of a well-balanced life.

Three points have been laid stress upon. (i) Food and fast, (ii) Sleep and wakefulness, (iii) Work and recreation.

(i) Food and fast: It is a mistake to eat too much or to eat too little. 'A sound mind in a sound body' is a stale old truth what calls for no demonstration. Every one should eat a moderate quantity of nutritive food to keep up health and strength. Indigestion and disease is the result of over-eating. Weakness, debility, and collapse, follows in the wake of insufficient nourishment. Temperance and moderation is the golden mean that the Yogin is therefore advised to adopt.

In *Satapatha Sruti*, there are Mantras about the folly of over-eating and under-eating. In *Yoga Shastra* it is said that a man should fill only half his stomach with food, one quarter with water, and leave the remainder empty for the free play of air and gas.

'Moderation' in food should here be taken in a liberal sense. It does not exclude periodical fasts so largely enjoined in the religious life of Hindus. The *Yekadasi fast* is a well-known instance of beneficial

abstinence. It is not only good from the standpoint of piety but most valuable to give the digestive machinery a much-needed periodical rest. Even in the west did especially so in America, the value of 'fast' as a cure or a preventive of physical ills is coming to be largely realized.

It is to be remembered that it is the *food and fast* of the *Yogic aspirant* that is here dealt with. The soldier in an action may not be fettered with the same rules as he. But the Yogin's chief aspiration is *Meditation*. For promoting the intense power of the Mind to concentrate itself on a single point, it is necessary that the food eaten is not hard of digestion, nor should it draw off blood from the brain too much and too long. The word used in the text in qualifying the food, the work, the sleep, and the recreation of the aspirant, is युक्त which means "regulated and proper." It means, "what is helpful to meditation and is not for hindrance." So no hard and fast rule can be laid down in respect to quantity, kind etc., so as to be applicable universally.

(ii) Sleep and wakefulness: Too much of sleep promotes laziness. Although the meditator is seemingly quiet and inactive, he resembles a deep current whose speed and velocity lies beneath. He is very far indeed from a lazy man, for, as the Yoga Shastra points out, the molecules of his mind are in the white heat of agitated vibration in its effort to focus itself on a single image. From time to time, the Yogin, therefore, must give up by postures, close his eyes,

banish the mental image, unscrew the mental tension and sleep moderately. The Yoga Shastra prescribes for him a sleep of only 4 hours in midnight.

(iii) Work and recreation. The test is that neither should produce fatigue and exhaustion. बिहार chiefly denotes *walking* as an exercise of pleasure and rest. The Smritis lay down krosa (3 miles or so) and yojana as the limits of a healthy walk. It may mean sports and amusements generally intended to relieve an overstrung mind. Physical labour calculated to impair health and vigor should be avoided whether the exertion be in the direction of secular work or pious observances.

Thus we have in the text the quintessence of a well-ordered practical life of wisdom. It admonishes a rebuke to the gormandizer as well as to the fastidious abstainer. It rebukes excess of every kind and recommends temperance and moderation in sleep, exercise and everything else. With such a life, Sri Krishna holds, meditation is in perfect harmony.

18) यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निःस्पृहस्सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥

यदा	...	when
विनियतं	...	controlled
चित्तं	...	the mind

आत्मनि	...	in God
एव	...	alone
अवतिष्ठते	...	stays
निःस्पृहः	...	desireless
सर्वकामेभ्यः	...	of all pleasures
युक्तः	...	the Yogin
इति	...	thus
उच्यते	...	is called
तदा	...	then

“When the mind kept under control stays in God one, desireless of all pleasures, then he is called a Yogin.”

It may be recollected that in verse 54 of chapter II, the sage established God-vision was defined to be one who gave up all desires and remained contented in God alone and by His Grace. The same description is repeated here of one who is established by Yoga. The sage of Yogic Meditation is akin to the sage of established God-vision. He is either a person who has already visioned God or who on the eve of that state. Hence *desirelessness* is a distinguishing characteristic that marks him from all ordinary men of the world.

The only difficult word in the verse is आत्मनि, according to Madhwa. He therefore gives its meaning. This is in rejection of other interpretations such as ‘the self’. Sankaracharya has adopted this sense

and has rendered the first line to mean "that the Mind should be fixed by the Yogin *in one's own self*." Ramanujacharya harps throughout on this burden that Self-Realization is the goal of aspiration. The Yoga Shastra of Patanjali describes the ideal to be the *differentiation* of the soul from matter. There have been in India all sorts of theories about the Atman and the aspirants' goal.

Although Meditation has been treated of in very learned books as a highly cultured science and art full of detailed divisions and sub-divisions and elaborate definitions and analyses, no Teacher pointed out before Sri Madhwa did, the paramount importance of a hearty surrender unto God and the deep concentration of thought upon Him. Hence Sri Madhwa picks up the solitary word आत्मनि for comment, leaving it to the reader to understand the rest of the verse from his own general knowledge.

Among the members of the Non-Dualist school, it is considered that this verse relates to the sage who has realized Unity by a conviction of the world's unreality. Such a sage may be one of two well-known classes. He may be *wakeful* and move about living like other people, gratifying appetites and fulfilling apparent obligations. Or he may be one of the highest class of समाधि wherein he is totally unconscious of the outer world. Opinion is not unanimous among the commendators of this school whether the text relates to the one or the other of the said groups or whether it applies to both. Sankaracharya seems

to that the first group संप्रज्ञात is here referred to. Neelakanta and Madhusoodana whom Venkatanath copies, hold the view that the *Meditator in absolute trance* is the sage adverted to.

It is hard to see which word or words in the text furnishes the clue for these dogmatic distinctions. The verses 16 and 17 which speak of regulated food, sleep, work and recreation contain no word to denote the *wakeful Sage pf Realized Unity*. Nor does the present verse furnish any clue for the view that it contemplates *only the sage of absolute* trance.

The commentators of Sankaracharya's school seem to hope and believe that the 'Samadhi trance' of the highest class is helpful to them in introducing the tenets of Non-dualism into the expressions of the verse. Under this hope and belief, they endeavour to read their cherished doctrine into some word or other of the text. This, however, is a vain hope that if 'trance' is the gist of the verse, it should connote only Non-dualism. However, proceeding on this track, Anandagiri, Neelakanta, Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha have pitched on what each considered the most suitable and convenient word for the purpose and have read Monism therein.

There are three things predicated of the Yogin, viz.,

(i) that his mind is kept within control (चित्तं विनियतं);

(ii) that he stays in Atman alone (आत्मन्येवावतिष्ठते);

(iii) that he is desireless of all pleasures (निःस्पृहस्सर्वकामेभ्यः).

Anandagiri selects No. (ii) for his purpose. Under that, he consoles himself with the gloss that "the Mind being an unrealitly remains merged in the Atman like the silver in the mother-of-pearl." But to "stay in the Atman" is not the same thing as to become the Atman as the locative case denotes *difference* and not identify.

Neelakanta chooses the expression No. (iii) (desirelessness) for the peg to hang his doctrines on. He makes out that the Mind ceases to desire objects because *it has become those objects by means of realized unity*. This is, of course, their oft-recurring jargon not capable of being traced to any specific word or syllable found in the verse.

Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha adopt a method of their own to read Non-Dualism in the words (No. iii) निःस्पृहस्सर्वकामेभ्यः (desireless of every pleasure). Venkatanatha calls the technique Patanjali into requisition and relies much on the distinction in Yoga Shastra between अपरवैराग्य and परवैराग्य, i.e., Vairagya the lower and the higher. The former falls under four subdivisions, which are varying stages of the Meditation-curriculum. The latter is the trance supreme in which the Yogin has restinquished every tie or connection with the world. Venkatanatha

concludes that the phrase निःस्पृहस्सर्वकामेभ्यः is a description of this stage wherein all links between the Yogin and the world have been snapped asunder.

This notice of the *higher Vairagya* being the purport of the verse is one borrowed by Venkatanath from Madhusoodana and elaborated.

But the system of Patanjali is radically at variance with Non-Dualism in many important points. Patanjali is a dualist. He regards the Atman as the *Enjoyer or sufferer* while Pradhana (matter). His goal (कैवल्य) as the ways and means of the good, consists in the realization of the Atman's *distinctness from Pradhana* (matter). He looks upon both the matter and the soul as real. He attaches little value to God as the central point of Meditation.

We thus see that when Patanjali speaks of परवैराग्य as the utmost point of the goal, he does not mean the same thing as Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha do. The word कामेभ्यः which literally means 'pleasures,' has to be twisted by them to stand for the totality of cosmic experience. This involves an uncalled for strain of interpretation. The necessity to rely so much on Patanjali's intricate system is far from apparent. The Geeta is essentially Vedantic and dwells much on the importance of the Atman. As Sri Madhwa understands, the word Atman stands chiefly for God. The plain language of the verse gives us a fair description of Meditation as a valuable auxiliary to God-vision and as a distinguishing feature of the sage after he has

visioned the Lord. Is it not enough to cling to this plain lesson, rather than encumber the plain words with far-fetched definitions of an abstruse metaphysics?

19) यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युंजतो योगमात्मनः ॥

यथा	... just as
दीपः	... the flame (the lamp)
निवातस्थः	... in a windless place
न	... not
इंगते	... flickers
सा	... that
उपमा	... the likeness
स्मृता	... is deemed
योगिनः	... of the Yogin
यतचित्तस्य	... of the subdued mind
युंजतः	... doing
योगं	... Meditation
आत्मनः	... of God

“Just as the flame flickers not in a windless place, such is deemed the resemblance with the subdued mind of the Yogin who is practising the Yogic Meditation of God,”

This verse contains a very happy simile. The one-pointed, luminous Mind of the Meditator is compared to the steady flame of the lamp sheltered fully from the wind. Desires fed by the senses are the winds that cause the Mind-Flame to flicker. When the senses are subdued and desires banished, there are no gusts of any kind to agitate the flame and it shines then steady and upright.

Sri Madhwa construes आत्मा at the end of the verse to mean God. If आत्मा does not mean God, then the redundancy between योगिनः and योगं युञ्जतः is obvious. But आत्मनः saves the redundancy by pointing attention to God as the focus of Meditation. Studying the text more closely, we have to ascertain what are the *things compared to each other*. Various views have been stated on the subject.

Some hold that the two objects compared are the *steadiness* of the flame and the *steadiness* of the Mind. Others say that the *flame* and the *soul* (Atman) are the two objects. Others again say that the *flame* and the *Mind* are the things referred to. There is divergence in other matters of detail also.

Ramanujacharya and Desikar think that it is the *soul* (Jeeva) of the *Yogin*, that is compared to the Flame. The *Yogin's spirit* shines self-luminous, as soon as the mind and the senses which are the gates of ingress for pleasures are shut and barred.

In this interpretation, that is, that the *Atman* is likened the Lamp, the question arises whose Atman? The reply is, in the language of the text, योगिनः (of the Yogin) and योगं युञ्जतः (of the doer of Yoga). It is not easy to distinguish between योगिनः and योगं युञ्जतः; nor has any distinction been pointed out by the learned commentators. For my part, I cannot see any good ground why these writers fight shy of the idea that God should be the true focus of all pious Meditation.

Among the commentators of the Advaitic school there is well-nigh unanimity on the point that it is the Flame and the Yogin's Mind that are likened to each other. Anandagiri suggests a slight modification. He thinks that it is not the *Lamp and the Mind* that resembles, but the steadiness appertaining to each. In this view, a word denoting steadiness has to be understood in the second line. However, Anandagiri's construction involves no substantial alteration of the purport.

All the other writers of the school are agreed that the *Yogin's Mind* is likened to a *steady Lamp*. The author of Vivriti concurs in this.

In pointing out the Geetic word or words of the second line which denote the *Mind*, Madhusoodana has a long note at the end of which he concludes that आत्मा in the verse is that word. In his opinion, if आत्मा here stands not for the *Mind* but denotes *The spirit of Brahman*, it is not possible to pitch on any

other word in the text for denoting the *Mind*. He construes the line in question (the second line) to mark *three* different stages of the Yogic practice. Thus योगिनः marks the earliest stage of one-pointedness; the word यतचित्तस्य marks the second stage of निरोध, a more or less complete withdrawal from the world; (3) the word योगं युंजतः stands for the highest trance; आत्मनः denotes the *Mind* in this last mentioned condition. It is to be observed that Madhusoodana dissents from Sankara Bhashya and even criticises the interpretation that *Atman* means Brahman.

We may note that in the school of Non-Dualism, the mind centred on Brahman *becomes* Brahman. Madhusoodana, no doubt, holds to this dogma like his brethren. On the footing of this dogma, his brethren construe आत्मनः योगं to mean the 'Unification with Brahman'. But Madhusoodana objects to this interpretation here and prefers आत्मा to stand for the Mind. Venkatanatha meekly follows and adopts Madhusoodana, without any argument or criticism.

Utkarsha Deepika quotes Madhusoodana at length, and severely criticises him for dissenting from Sankaracharya. Among his criticisms, we find the crushing reply that though *Atman* might not denote the *Mind*, still in यतचित्तस्य we have the word which means the *Mind* likened to the unflickering Lamp. So Madhusoodana's fear in this behalf that no other word in the text but the word आत्मा is available for the desired purpose is unfounded.

Utkarsha Deepika next tackles the subtleties about the Mind *becoming* Brahman. Into this we need hardly enter. We tread on delicate ground, where we see eminent members of the same school disputing on a highly subtle dogma of their own.

Adverting to the *three* graduated stages read by Madhusoodana into the various expressions of the text, Utkarsha Deepika thinks that the verse should not apply to the trance (निरोध or समाधि) but only to a much lower stage called एकाग्रता (a crude sort of one-pointedness). In his opinion, the context of the Geeta shows this, and Sankaracharya is obviously of that view. Neelakanta shares the same view as Utkarsha Deepika.

To my mind this controversy is pointless. By adopting and relying on Patanjali's most artificial definitions and importing his technical language, these commentators find themselves in a dilemma. They are for this reason unable very often to reconcile the previous and subsequent verses of the Geetic theme. The reason is obvious.

Sri Krishna has not used the words of Patanjali in the sense given to them by him. The Lord is dealing with self-control, meditation, and God-vision, from the stand-point of Vedic Theism. Occasionally while dwelling on the psychology connected with the subject, some of His words happen to tally with those used by Patanjali. Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha in particular have given free scope to their erudition

in the field of Yoga and have performed feats in pointing out that Sri Krishna's Yoga corresponds to and tallies with that of Patanjali. Sankaracharya does not obviously set the same value on the Yoga of Patanjali and hardly makes anything like a serious effort to point out analogies and similarities of language, thought, or dogma.

Where there is no vital difference of theistic principles or cardinal tenets, we do not object to Patanjala of Sankhya or any well-reasoned science throwing light on mental and physical phenomena. In the text under comment, it will be sufficient if we firmly grasp the lesson that the Meditator has accomplished the highest ambition if and when his mind is fixed on God like an unflickering Lamp sheltered from the wind by wind-proof shutters.

Differences of opinion regarding the minute shades of thought underlying this word or that, hardly matter. But in all this wealth of erudition, the cardinal point ought not to be forgotten that the Meditator's focus is God. This point is overlooked by all the commentators but Sri Madhwa. This teacher therefore confines his notes of the verse to this single point. His Bhashya here consists of three words only आत्मनो भगवद्विषयं योगं which means "The Yoga addressed to God the Atman."

20) यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥

यत्र	... where
उपरमते	... rests quiet
चित्तं	... the mind
निरुद्धं	... restrained
योगसेवया	... by the practice of yoga
यत्र	... where
च	... and
एव	... alone
आत्मना	... by the Mind
आत्मानं	... God
पश्यन्	... seeing
आत्मनि	... in (his) own body
तुष्यति	... rejoices

“Where the Mind rests quiet, restrained by the practice of yoga, and where alone, he rejoices seeing God in his body, by the mind—,”

This and the next three verses go together. Of the word यत्र translated ‘where’, the construction is completed by तत् (that) in verse 23, the meaning being “the state in which the Mind rests, &c., &c., &c., know *that* to be yoga.”

यत्र in the text does not mean ‘when’. It denotes the state rather than the time. If it be construed as marking the time, the corresponding word in verse 23 should be तदा = then, rather than तत् which we

find. In Sankara Bhashya यत्र is rendered so as to refer to the *time* of Samadhi instead of the *state* of Samadhi.

Madhusoodana points out the said reason and criticizes the above rendering as wrong. (असाधु he says). Venkatanatha simply adopts Madhusoodana. The author of Utkarsha Deepika ever on the alert to defend Sankara Bhashya has not chosen to do so in the present instance as against Madhusoodana.

On another point also, there is some divergence between Sankaracharya and Madhusoodana. The former holds that the Mind-in-Samadhi likened to the steady flame in the foregoing verse is in the technical state called एकाग्रता of Yoga, while that present text relates to the technical state known as निरोध which is the highest trance.

The word निरुद्धं in the text may appear to support this refinement. Madhusoodana construed the foregoing verse itself as a reference to निरोध by the example of the lamp. So he cannot think of a higher stage than that which the present verse may apply to. Therefore, he explains the purport of the present verse by saying that this and the succeeding verses are only meant to throw further light on the last verse.

This divergence between the Teacher and the follower is the result of an endeavour to bring the Geeta far too much into line with Patanjali and find

parallel thoughts and words at every step. It is far from clear that Sri Krishna intends to lay so much emphasis on the technical distinctions of Patanjali and frames his own lessons on that basis or model.

उपरमते means literally 'retires or rests'. Desikar thinks that the idea of 'retiring or resting' being sufficiently denoted by निरुद्धं, उपरमते should mean here 'rejoices'. But Desikar does not notice तुष्यति which denotes the same idea of rejoicing. Hence there seems no sufficient reason to reject the ordinary sense of उपरमते and to render it to mean 'rejoicing'. To find rest in Samadhi is not, however, the same thing as the import of निरुद्धं. The latter denotes 'withdrawal or restraint', while the former connotes the positive aspect of refuge. First comes withdrawal and next quiescence. The difference is intelligible.

The second line has used the word आत्मा three times, one in the instrumental case, another in the accusative and the third in the locative. Some render all the three to mean *the self*. Sri Madhwa takes आत्मना to mean "by the mind", आत्मानं mean 'God', and आत्मनि to mean "In the body". While in Samsara, God-vision is a mental perception. The liberated soul, the Mukta, who has no material mind as an organ of perception, sees God with his spiritual eye. But the Yogin in Samadhi being still in Samsara, sees God only with his mental eye. आत्मना denoting "By the mind" is the clear.

On the meaning of आत्मना as a reference to the mind, almost everyone is agreed, though the precise reason for the same is not, perhaps, assented to.

As to the remaining two words आत्मानं and आत्मनि, Desikar explaining Ramanujacharya's view, dissents from and criticises the interpretation of आत्मानं into God. He thinks that as it is the 'Yoga of Self' that we are dealing with, God is out of place in such a context. Hence he says that आत्मानं पश्यन् ought to mean "*seeing the self*".

With Ramanujacharya 'the self' is not the same as Brahman. This being so, what it is to '*see the self*' is not clear. The *self* is cognizable by self-consciousness. It is the principle of the Ego. No *Mind* is necessary for this perception. What is meant evidently is that a clear mind discriminates the Body from the Soul. To leave God out of account altogether and harp only on the distinctness of the soul from the Body is a leaf borrowed from Patanjali, and too much is being made of it to the prejudice of Theistic Meditation truly understood.

आत्मनि (*In the Atman*) has also evoked divergence of construction. Sri Madhwa takes this word to emphasize the point that the Yogin finds the Divine Image in his own heart and not in anything external. The Divine Form that appears before the Mind is the one that permeates the heart and presides over the Body in all its functions. The Yogin thinks not of the Divine

Form that pervades other objects, or Brahmanda, at the creation or the dissolution of Manifested nature.

The school of Sankaracharya takes occasion, in the juxtaposition of आत्मानं and आत्मनि, to read Adwaita therein. Anandagiri says that the former word denotes Brahman—the “That” (तत्) of the Sruti and the latter stands for the Jeeva — the ‘thou’ of the Sruti त्वं. The word पश्यन् in the verse denotes the realization of their oneness. Sankarananda understands आत्मनि to stand for the clear Mind on which, as on a clear sky, Brahman is depicted, like the disc of the full moon. Seeing this picture, the Yogin next realizes that the picture is *himself*. (आत्मना पश्यति = identifies it with himself).

Madhusoodana thinks that आत्मानं means Brahman, आत्मना means “by the clear mind”, and पश्यन् denotes ‘*the perception Unity*’. He disconnects आत्मनि to be joined to तुष्यति so that the meaning may be that the “Yogin rejoices in Brahman the ‘mass of *unalloyed Bliss*’ (आत्मनि = in the mass of unalloyed bliss).

In these three different presentments, the common feature is that the Yogin is supposed to realise Adwaita and the divergence is in the import of the words आत्मना, आत्मानं and आत्मनि. Fancy has played a part in interpreting the words and especially so in construing पश्यन् (seeing) to stand for the “*Realiza-*

tion of Unity." It is moreover difficult to follow Madhusoodana when he speaks of the Yogin enjoying *bliss in the Atman*. The sage of realized unity is, according to the theory of Non-Dualism, one that has far out-soared the Zone of bliss. Brahman himself (or itself rather) has or enjoys no bliss, but is only said to be a *mass of bliss*.

The word आत्मा used in three different grammatical cases naturally implies distinctions between the known (आत्मानं), the instrument of knowledge (आत्मना) and the अधिकरण of knowledge (आत्मनि). Why words bearing the strong impress of differentiation (भेद) should be twisted to denote the very opposite, I fail to see. Moreover, तुष्यति denoting bliss or joy is far from consistent with the creed of Adwaita. For, there is no place for bliss or feeling of any sort in their conception of Mukti.

The reader may recall to memory verse No. 55 of chapter II of which the second line in particular is similar to the text in words and thought.

21) सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।
वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥

सुखं ... the happiness

आत्यन्तिकं ... excessive

यत् ... what

तत् that

बुद्धिग्राह्यं ... realizable by consciousness

अतीन्द्रियं ... beyond the senses

वेत्ति ... experiences

यत्र ... in which

न च ... and not

एव ... only

अयं ... he

स्थितः ... who stays

चलति ... stirs

तत्त्वतः ... from the Divine Form

"The excessive happiness that is realizable by consciousness and is beyond the senses, is experienced by him in that state (योग) and he does not stir at all from the contemplated Divine Form therein (in that योग)."

The description of the Yogin's experience is continued here. The last verse ended by observing that the Yogin feels gratified by the vision of God. This joy is now described further. It is said to be excessive and realizable only by consciousness, being beyond the pale of the senses. The joy is so transcendental that the Yogin engaged in this Yoga does not stir from the Divine Form he sees and enjoys.

यत्र (wherein) is an adverbial relative Pronoun whose sense is completed by “तत्” in verse No. 23.

Some read यत्र in the first line too, in the place of यत्. This is quite unnecessary. यत्र in the second line qualifies all the predications of the verse.

The bliss in question is beyond the senses in that it is not a result or effect of sense-objects. What it is like is not describable. Inward experience is the only illuminator thereof, so that verbal delineation such as that it is exquisite or transcendental is hardly of value for a correct picture of the state.

Some inconsistency is suspected between the expressions बुद्धिग्राह्यं and अतीन्द्रियं. It is objected that if it be uncognizable by the senses, it could not be cognized by Buddhi (बुद्धि) either, Buddhi being but an internal organ. Ramanujacharya therefore takes बुद्धि here to mean not ‘Reason’ or the Discriminative Faculty, as it ordinarily means, but ‘the knowledge of self’. As, according to him, the bliss follows from the knowledge that the soul is different from the Body बुद्धिग्राह्यं is construed to mean “Resulting from spiritual knowledge.”

This interpretation is not convincing. In the first place, ग्राह्य in the text means ‘cognizable’ or ‘capable of being experienced.’ It does not denote the ‘cause or source’ of the happiness in question as

Ramanujacharya seems to think, but the medium by which the feeling is reflected as it were, and becomes manifest. Secondly, this Teacher is throughout laying far too much emphasis on the knowledge of the soul's distinctness. It is far more satisfactory to substitute God in the place of the soul or self and glorify Divine Meditation as the cause and source of the bliss.

In the school of Non-Dualism, the 'bliss' under notice is *Brahman*. Brahman is therefore adverted to here as बुद्धिग्राह्य,, 'cognizable by subtle Reason,' as the Sruti says "दृश्यते त्वग्रया बुद्ध्या". But the text is clear that it is the 'bliss' felt and experienced by the Meditator that is spoken of here.

It is the exquisite happiness of the trance wherein the Yogin's mind is focussed on God that we are dealing with. How this bliss of the Yogin can be *Brahman itself* it is not easy to see. Of course, the Yogin himself is Brahman in their view. But while speaking of the Yogin, the Yoga, and the Yogic bliss, the distinction on which these words are used separately cannot be lost sight of. Otherwise, the lesson loses all its value.

It construing अतीन्द्रियं which means 'beyond the senses,' Venkatanatha quotes the well-known Sruti 'यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते' which describes Brahman as beyond words and thought. Here again, there is obvious fallacy. It is the Yogin's joy that is called अतीन्द्रिय and not *Brahman*.

There is also inconsistency in taking Brahman *to be cognizable by fine Reason* (बुद्धिग्राह्यं and दृश्यते त्वग्रया बुद्ध्या) and saying in the same breath that Brahman is beyond words and thought, अतीन्द्रिय. It Brahman is beyond thought, He (or it) cannot be cognized by subtle reason or any other instrument of knowledge.

Others of the same faith prefer to make out Adwaita in the word तत्त्वतः at the end of the verse. तत् is Brahman. तत्त्वं is 'being or becoming Brahman'. The Yogin becomes Brahman and from that state once reached he does not recede or change. Hence the text says 'न चलति तत्त्वतः'

The word तत्त्वं ordinarily means fact or truth. God being 'the Great Truth', Sri Madhwa interprets the word to mean the Divine Form that the Yogin is privileged to look on, and from which he does not stir, because the joy he feels is exquisite and superb. If तत्त्व however denotes "Unity with Brahman" and न चलति denotes that the Yogin is permanently and unalterably fixed up in the trance of Unity, it is not easy to reconcile the rest of the verse with this.

We are told of the Yogin experiencing joy, but the Yogin of unwakeable trance *having become Brahman* can feel no joy at all. He has soared above every experience of feeling. Brahman feels no joy according to Monism and the Yogin therefore is above joys too. It is said in the verse that Buddhi cognizes

the Joy. The Yogin of realized Adwaita being one that has far outsoared 'Buddhi', this description too is inappropriate for him. Even in Patanjali's system it is said that at the goal nothing is felt or cognized. There is no place for Buddhi as functioning or for joy being experienced. The soul (पुरुष) being known as apart from the Body, that is कैवल्य according to Yoga Shastra.

Moreover, there is nothing to show here that the sage in question is one permanently and unalterably fixed up in Yoga. What the verse means really is that he stirs not from the Divine Form so long as he experiences the supreme joy and continues in Meditation. But it is not every Jeeva that is competent to meditate incessantly or for ever. It depends on the strength and endurance of each Jeeva how long and to what extent he can stand the intense tension of *Yoga* concentration.

In Maitrayana Sruti it is said षड्भिर्मासैस्तु युक्तस्य नित्ययुक्तस्य देहिनः आनन्दः परमो गुह्यः सम्यग्योगः प्रवर्तते ॥ "One who is regularly practising Yoga for six months, experiences a secret, exquisite joy and his Yoga is sound." The recommendation here not for an *all-time* Yoga but only for periodical engagement.

In the Mahabharata, Aswamedha Anugeeta, Chapter 19, a passage describes the Yogin visioning the Divine Form that fills Infinity with His Myriad legs, hands, eyes, heads and mouths. The passage refers also to the Sruti recommending Yoga for six months. It runs thus :—

न त्वसौ चक्षुषा ग्राह्यो न च सर्वैरपीन्द्रियैः ।
 मनसैव प्रदीपेन महानात्मा प्रदृश्यते ॥
 सर्वतः पाणिपादान्तः सर्वतोक्षिशिरोमुखः ।
 सर्वतः श्रुतिमाँल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठते ॥
 आत्मानमालोकयति मनसा प्रहसन्निव ।
 तदैवमाश्रयं कृत्वा मोक्षं याति ततो मयि ।
 षण्मासान्नित्ययुक्तस्य योगः पार्थः प्रवर्तते ॥

The purport is this :-

"God is not to be seen by the eye or by the other senses. By the Mind-lamp is the Great Atman visioned. He has his handle and legs spread out to the ends of space and everywhere are His eyes, heads, and mouths. His ear is omnipresent and He stays encompassing all. The Yogin sees Him, the Atman, with his mind in a smile of joy. Relying on Him, he attains Moksha and comes to Me Thus practising regular Yoga for periods of six months, he becomes established in Yoga, O! Arjuna."

It remains to notice Neelakanta's exposition of तत्त्वतः He takes तत्त्वतः to mean in truth' and hangs on it the non-dualistic tenet that the Yogin does not, *in fact and truth* meditate as he may seem to do in the Yoga practice. In Yoga, the Yogin seems to think and meditate, and he looks like a thinker or meditator. He seems to be different from Brahman and looks

engaged in the process or act of concentration. All this is false.' He only seems to meditate, but in truth (तत्त्वतः) he does not. Neelakanta quotes the Sruti "ध्यायतीव, लेलायतीव" in support of the position that the Yogin's *Meditation* is but a myth.

Neelakanta's position is obviously untenable. The Veda he relies on is not a description of the Yogin but of God. The passage relates to God spoken of sometimes as in Meditation. The omniscient Being has no need to meditate, for, He cognizes all by direct Perception. Where He is spoken of as meditating, the meaning is that He only *looks* so.

This has nothing to do with the poor yogin who has to practise and toil hard to be able to focus his mind on God. With him it is no *seeming*, but a most intense effort and discipline seriously engaged in and actually carried out.

Next it is to be observed that in the Geeta text, it makes little sense to say that the Yogin's Meditation is untrue and illusory. In the context, Sri Krishna is proceeding step by step importing to us information about the Yoga of Meditation. He told us of the Yogin's seat, his posture, his mental attitude and so on, up to Meditation.

Why should the Lord suddenly interpose the discordant observation that the Yogin's Meditation which he took so much trouble to expatiate upon is after all a myth, and that the Yogin does not in fact meditate at all, although may seem to do so. If the

Yogin does not meditate in truth, it follows also that he does not experience any joy, so that the statement in the text about his joy, its exquisite character, its cognizableness by Buddhi and its uncognizableness by the senses is incomprehensible. Nor is there any justification for all this assumption. Sankaracharya himself has not interpreted the verse in this manner. It is therefore surprising that Non-dualistic zeal should assert itself so much at the expense of sound canons of interpretation.

22) यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः।
यस्मिस्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणाऽपि विचाल्यते ॥

23) तं विद्याद्दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगो निर्विण्णचेतसा ॥

यं	...	which
लब्ध्वा	...	attaining
च	...	and
अपरं	...	any other
लाभं	...	acquisition
मन्यते	...	regards
न	...	not
अधिकं	...	superior

ततः	...	thereto
यस्मिन्	...	wherein
स्थितः	...	staying
न	...	not
दुःखेन	...	by distress
गुरुणा	...	great
अपि	...	even
विचाल्यते	...	is shaken
तं	...	that
विद्यात्	...	shall know
दुःखसंयोगवियोगं	...	the snapper of every link of suffering
योगसंज्ञितं	...	designated yoga
सः	...	that
निश्चयेन	...	as indispensable
योक्तव्यः	...	should be practised
योगः	...	Yoga
निर्विण्णचेतसा	...	with a disattached mind

22. "Which attaining, he does not regard any other acquisition as superior thereto ; staying in which, he is not shaken even by great causes of distress."

23. "Know *that* which is designated 'Yoga' the snapper of all links of suffering. That 'Yoga' should be indispensably practised with a disattached Mind."

It has been already pointed out that all the relative pronouns and adverbs यत्, यत्र &c. from verse 20, are governed and completed by तत् in verse No.23. In all these verses a description of *Yoga* is given.

In verse 22, 'Yoga' is described as the condition in which Yogin ceases to regard any other acquisition in the world as of any value compared with what he has secured. Having reached true Yoga he regards nothing equal or superior to it. This is result of आत्मलाभ. There is no possession more valuable than the salvation of the soul. This sage having visioned God, (as stated in verse 20) and never swerving from God (as stated in verse 21), has acquired something equal to which no worldly possession is conceivable. As God is supreme, it follows that he clings to God and treasures Him in his heart, cannot, in the very nature of things, aspire to or long for anything higher.

The last verse spoke of limitless bliss experienced by the Yogin. Here the absence of any possession more valuable than Yoga is asserted. Moreover the second line of the text (verse 22) states that the Yogin is no longer liable to be distracted or affected by any earthly distress or suffering however great. The reason is obvious.

Sankarananda explains the unequalled greatness of *Yoga* by saying that as everything but Brahman is unreal, nothing can be of equal or superior value to the Yogin of 'Realized Oneness'. He states the objector's possible position that the Satyaloka of

Brahma or the Vykuntaloka of Vishnu might be deemed a valuable acquisition. But, says he, these are as unreal as any earthly thing and deserve not any more of longing than other objects in Earth or Heaven.

In this explanation of Sankarananda, the unreality of the Universe is the rationale of the Yogin's greatness. This 'unreality' is the central point of Non-Dualism, around which controversy is hot. No other commentator has, in this verse, dragged in this particular point of controversy. But Sankarananda is incapable of construing any verse without bringing in, this pet creed of his school.

The verse says, adverting to the Yogin's valuable possession *viz.*, *Yoga*, that he regards not any other possession as superior. The language implies that *Yoga regarded as a real fact* is weighed against other things *regarded also as facts* and is found more valuable. We talk of a guinea being more valuable than rupee both being current coins but no one speaks of the guinea being more valuable than hare's horn or the silver-in-the-mother-of-pearl.

Sankarananda enjoys a fling at Vaikunta and Vishnu the course of his explanation. To Vaishnavas, Vishnu is the God Supreme and Vaikunta is the Supreme Goal. Whether Sankarananda is a Vaishnava or not is more than I can discover.

In Utkarsha Deepika, there is a long note wherein the author strongly criticises Madhusoodana for dis-

senting from Sankara Bhashya in this context. According to Sankaracharya, verse 19 where the 'Lamp' is referred to for illustration, deals with a particular stage of Meditative Trance, known in Yoga Shastra as *one-pointedness* (एकाग्रता); and verses Nos. 21, 22 and 23 relate to the next higher stage thereof known as निरोध (Restraint). Madhusoodana whom Venkatanatha blindly follows thinks that his master is wrong and that all the abovenamed verses from 19 onwards deal only with निरोध.

The controversy is hardly of importance. It is assumed by both that Sri.Krishna is using only the technical words of Patanjali in Patanjali's sense and closely pursuing the labyrinth of that Shastra. On this assumption as the groundwork, Sankaracharya and Madhusoodana carry on a controversy as to which is the proper *word* for verse No.19 and which, for the later verses. But the groundwork itself is hollow.

Under verse 22, Ramanujacharya draws attention to the fact that the assertion about the Yogin "*not regarding any other acquisition as more valuable*" must necessarily relate to the Yogin in his wakeful state as distinguished from the trance he occasionally plunges in. In the trance, the Yogin is dead to external sensation and there is, therefore, no possibility of his experiencing any outward feeling and weighing one thing against another in value. The same observation applies to the second line of verse 22, which speaks of the "Yogin not being affected by any distress or suffering whatsoever." This is ap-

plicable only the Seer's wakeful hours, there being no experience of any sensuous state while he is in trance.

In verse 23, Yoga is said to be the designation of a state which disconnects the Yogin from all pain-giving contacts, “दुःखसंयोगवियोगं”. ‘One would have thought that dissociation pain’ was enough and that the word ‘contact’ संयोग was superfluous. But the object of using that word is to show that Yoga destroys the contact where it exists, and *prevents* the contact if it is not already established.

The statement made is that वियोग is योग. Herein the antithesis may be noted. वियोग is a negation of योग. How would two such things be one and the same? On this, some etymological subtlety has been expended by commentators to make them both ‘positive’ things. Into this, we need hardly enter here.

In the second line of verse 23, there is difference of opinion to whether the true word is निर्विण्णचेतसा or अनिर्विण्णचेतसा. The sense brought out varies according as we take the one or the other.

Raghavendra Swamin adopts the former in his Vivriti and Ramanujacharya has adopted the latter along with most of the Adwaitic commentators.

The meaning of the text in the latter rendering may be stated thus :— ‘The Yogin should practice

Yoga, armed with निश्चय (conviction) and अनिर्वेद (confidence) or hope. He should feel convinced that his preceptor is wise and knowing. He should not waver in faith regarding the Vedas and Shashtra. He should feel sure that his salvation will come, some day. Then he should also feel confidence in his own strength to achieve Yoga. It may be that the task is beset with apparently insurmountable difficulties. But he should not give way to despair. He must have sufficient courage to be resolved to achieve the goal now or at some time in the infinite future before him. निर्वेद is despair and अनिर्वेद is self-confidence or hope. In the present context निर्वेद is not to be understood in the well-known sense of 'disattachment' (वैराग्य). It is here used in a special sense'.

Madhusoodana recites a story to illustrate the above meaning. The story is found, I believe, in the Mahabharata. Once upon a time, a bird laid eggs on a sea-shore. A big wave washed them down into the sea. The bird felt woe-stricken and begged the Ocean to give up the eggs. But the proud Ocean paid no heed to the bird.

The latter took a vow of vengeance and resolved to suck up the water by its beak, drop by drop, and dry up the sea. It commenced the task with the tip of its tiny beak, with the determination and confidence of achieving the purpose at some time or other in the infinite future before it. Its kith and kin tried hard to dissuade the bird from the impossible task.

But it was undaunted and unconvinced. Narada too interceded in vain.

The अनिर्वेद of the bird secured for it the sympathy of Narada. This sage got Garuda to help the bird, by tickling him against the Ocean with the argument that the latter had, by injuring this bird, done injury to the whole of the feathered creation, and had offended the *amour propre* of Garuda himself. When Garuda, thus enlisted, began to suck up the waters with his huge wings, the Ocean apologised and gave the eggs.

The story gives point to a great truth. The lazy man who will not launch upon any undertaking, being frightened by the real or imagined magnitude of the task before him can never be of service to himself or his fellows. Nothing that is valuable or worthy is accomplished without arduous labour and sustained application. One who sets about any task with courage and confidence is bound to win in the long run.

Desikar quotes Manu to show that अनिर्विण्ण is the proper reading and निर्वेद here is 'despondency' and not 'disattachment'. On the other hand, Vivriti adopts निर्विण्णचेतसा as the correct reading. निर्वेद is a well-known word for Vairagya (disattachment) and this is the first requisite of Yoga. "अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः" is Patanjali's aphorism No.12, Chapter 1, and it lays down that practice and *disattachment* are the ways and means of Yogic restraint. Hence the appropriateness of 'Vairagya' in the present context is clear.

Neelakanta agrees that निर्विण्णचेतसा makes good sense. He adopts it as an alternative interpretation.

Among the members of the Non-Dualist school, some one adopts the reading निर्विण्णचेतसा and joins it with the present participle त्यक्त्वा of the succeeding verse. He explains his meaning to the following effect: 'Although the Yogin has renounced desires and triumphed over the senses so far as his own salvation is concerned, still, he may yield to impulses of altruism and sympathy and may betake to active life for the relief of other's distress and suffering. The present verse taken with the next (No.24) deprecates activity on behalf of others too for the same reason that it is wrong to work for one's own self'.

This interpretation is, of course, surprising. The exhortation to be *callous* in this wide sense is inconsistent with many a verse in chapter III (Nos.20,21,22 & 23) which speak of the seer's work for the guidance of the world. To relieve other's distress is a lofty piece of duty and nothing will please God more than this duty efficiently done. It is hard to see whence this writer got this notion of the 'accomplished Yogin' resisting even impulses of altruism.

The author of Utkarsha Deepika quotes this writer fully and criticises his view. I need hardly add that the criticism is just, although the reading निर्विण्णचेतसा itself is flawless. There is no need to go so far as the next verse to find a suitable verb for find निर्विण्णचेतसा. In the present one itself, it may be

read with योक्तव्यः, so that the meaning is, Yoga should be practised with a 'disattached mind.'

In the text we find it said that Yoga should be practised निश्चयेन. This last word has been rendered by Sri Madhwa to mean '*positively, certainly, or indispensably.*' The idea according to him, that it should on no account be shunned there is no escape from it. If one be a मुमुक्षु, he must engaged in this Yoga.

All the other commentators think that निश्चय here denote conviction, belief or faith. The Yogin, according to this inter pretation, should be no half-hearted believer. He must with a firm, hearty belief and conviction that he is on the rig path and that he shall be crowned with success. Adding the to the 'confidence or hopefulness' spoken of in the next work अनिर्विण्णचेतसा, the exhortation is to be affirm believer and proceed with courage and hope.

It is needless to examine these divergences too closely and plead for this and reject that. They do not affect or relate any fundamental tenet of religion.

24) संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।

मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥

संकल्पप्रभवान् ... born of will

कामान् ... desires

त्यक्त्वा	...	abandoning
सर्वान्	...	all
अशेषतः	...	completely
मनसा	...	by the Mind
एव	...	only
इन्द्रियग्रामं	...	the group of the senses
विनियम्य	...	restraining
समन्ततः	...	entirely

“Abandoning all desires born of the will completely, and restraining entirely the group of the senses by the Mind”,

The verse is not complete. The predicate is found in the text verse उपरमेत् ‘let him become tranquil.’

The last foregoing verse advised ‘*Yoga with a disattached Mind.*’ ‘Disattachment’ is now taken up for a short elucidation. It is said that desires ought to be given up for Vairagya. As desires are the offspring of the will, we are told that the abandonment of desires is more or less within our power, because our volition is subject to our control.

Ramanujacharya explains the verse by pointing out that every man is in relation to two sets of external objects. What comes into contact with the sense-organs of knowledge (eye, ear, nose, touch and smell), such as heat and cold, are objects of direct perception. This is one group. The other group consists of those objects

which produce pleasure and pain by reason of Abhimana. The link between a man and his family or property is of the latter group. Some imagination is necessary to create the 'desires' of this class. Without imagination, no man can long for the prospects of his son, for the increase of his riches and so on. But in the former group which includes sensations such as *heat and cold*, no 'sankalpa' need be in evidence.

With reference to these two groups of 'Desires' Ramanujacharya thinks that those of the second group are the ones spoken of in the text as संकल्पप्रभवाः and are capable of *entire* renunciation. Desires connected with involuntary perceptual experience being of a different order, their renunciation is no so absolute, all that the sage can do being only to neutralize their effects by suppressing elations and griefs as the case may be. No other commentator has noticed this distinction between desires born of the will and those not so born.

It may be seen that the verse has used two words सर्वान् as अशेषतः which are apparently synonymous. The object is to point out that not only should *all* desires be given up but that *each* desire should be completely banished. Pleasures are rather hard to be given up. When castor-oil is poured out of a pot, some portion invariably sticks to the pot. So it is with pleasures. Exile them as we may, they cling to us in the shape of lurking vestiges and latent longings. अशेषतः is intended to lay stress on the necessity for total eradication.

संकल्प is a well-known word. No ceremony is performed in a Hindu household without *Sankalpa*. The purohit recites a long sentence commencing with the date and ending with the assertion "I will do this", before the ceremony is begun. The mind first resolves to do. The resolution is then spoken out. The act itself follows. *Sankalpa* strictly applies to the mental resolution. Loosely, it is applied to the vocal pronouncement also.

There are elaborate rules regarding appropriate *Sankalpasa*. A passage in Bhavishya Purana says (See the Sanskrit commentary), "None shall recite *Sankalpa* holding a bronze or a silver vessel, a stone, a conch, or a mother-of-pearl in his hand : nor with a mud pot. He should take up a *copper vessel* (औदुंबर पात्रं) well cleaned and filled with water wherein three pieces of Darbha grass, and some fruit, flower, and sesamum seeds have been put. He will make *Sankalpa* on the banks of a river or tank, facing the east or north and pouring water in the ईशानी quarter (north east).'

Sri Krishna says in the text, 'give up *Sankalpa* altogether.' He does not mean that no ceremonies should be done nor does He mean that ceremonies should not be begun in the orthodox manner so well-known. He means that a person entering on Meditation should make a vacuum of the Mind by emptying it of all longings with their causes.

Moreover, the sting in the ordinary Sankalpa is in the *egotism* it seemingly gives expression to. 'I will do this' is the chief predicate in all Sankalpas. Sri Krishna has told us often that the true Doer and Enjoyer is God. He who realizes his own dependence and undertakes ceremonies or doings in a spirit of devotion and surrender is not affected by Sankalpa worded, as it may be, in an egotistic vein.

The word संकल्प here points to another aspect also. To imagine virtue in vice, good in evil, and worth in the unworthy, is संकल्प etymologically understood. In this sense, it is clear how every desire for pleasure is born of संकल्प. For, no pleasure is, in fact, spiritual happiness ; nor is it free from pain as its cause or effect. It is an offspring of deluded imagination and mistaken fancy. The Lord points out this particular aspect and emphasizes the propriety and the necessity to give up all delusive fancies.

The second line speaks of "controlling all the senses *by the Mind*." We may mark the expression 'by the Mind'. It means that no other agency is of any use for the purpose. Bars and bolts are of little value in this respect, when the Mind indulges in a free roam. By the *Mind alone*, is a real control of the senses possible.

25) शनैश्शनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

शनैः	...	slowly
शनैः	...	slowly
उपरेमत्	...	shall withdraw
बुद्ध्या	...	with wisdom or reason
धृतिगृहीतया	...	ruled by courage and concentration
आत्मसंस्थं	...	resting on God
मनः	...	the Mind
कृत्वा	...	causing
न	...	not
किञ्चित्, अपि	...	anything, at all
चिन्तयेत्	...	shall think of

“Slowly and by degrees shall he withdraw, with the aid of Reason governed by courage and concentration, causing the Mind to rest on God, he shall think nothing else.”

This verse completes the sense of the last one. “Controlling the collection of senses with the Mind only, he shall withdraw by degrees,” is the full sentence. How the Mind can be restrained in its turn is the next query. This is answered by the lesson that reason aided by courage and concentration is a powerful auxiliary for getting the Mind under check.

The Mind is a delicate organ to handle. Hard and fast methods will be of no avail for subduing it. There is no use being in a hurry. Vigorous measures

will never do. Nor the eager seeker take it by storm. The Lord advises us to be patient and to proceed by degrees. Gently and quietly should point after point be won and secured, so that each day may see some slight but assured progress.

धृति means courage and concentration. धारणा is a technical word of Yoga Shastra denoting concentration. Deeper than that is Meditation known as ध्यान. Deeper still is समाधि the trance. The reader who is anxious to see the Geeta language correspond as much as possible with Patanjali's may, without much violence, find the text touching lightly on the three Yogic states of धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि collectively designated by the word संयम. धृति refers to धारणा. आत्मसंस्था is Meditation of God. न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् is समाधि.

A famous passage in Katavalli (Upanishad) the Jeeva is compared to a chariot owner, Budhi is said to be the driver, the Mind to be the reins and the senses are said to be the horses. In the light of this comparison, the statement in the last verse and the present one of the Geeta is clear. The senses (horses) are rightly controlled by the Mind (the reins) and the Mind itself is controlled by Buddhi (the driver). It is further necessary that Buddhi itself should be under check and firmly ruled by the master. Otherwise Buddhi might precipitate a fall. धृतिगृहीतया indicates the necessity to hold Buddhi firmly under control.

Madhusoodana and others so fond of the Geeta coming into line with Patanjalai do not however requisition that Shastra into service here. They construe धृति to mean only courage. The reference, is, according to them, to the conviction and hope spoken of in verse 23, that the goal will be a *fait accompli* some day or other.

In the second line आत्मा is God, according to Sri Madhwa. The final clause न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् means not that the Mind should be rendered a blank but that nothing should be thought of other than God. Some have actually construed this clause too literally. Sri Madhwa thinks that no Yoga deserves the name unless it is deeply and intimately associated with God. Among the members of the Advaita school Abhinava Guptacharya objects to the interpretation upholding mental vacuity. Such a mind is, in his opinion, an impossibility, unless it is deemed a synonym of "Nothingness" (शून्यता) itself.

Monists understand आत्मसंस्थ in their own peculiar way. In srutis and smritis there are heaps of texts speaking of Brahman as *the object of Perception or knowledge*. In the system of Non-Dualism, to know or see Brahman consists only in a rejection of what is *Non-Brahman*. They say that the Mind is unavoidably associated with Brahman as a pot is with Ether (आकाश).

Under the stress of experience, it takes shape as objects of the world. Coloured and eclipsed by matter,

it takes shape corresponding to the millions of sense-impacts to which it is exposed. All the while, it wears also the shape of Brahman. When the seer gradually dispels its *material shapes*, it shines out as the pure Brahman, this particular shape being ineffaceable and ineradicable by any means or instrumentality. To know or see Brahman therefore is only a process of cleansing the augean stables of all impurities so that Brahman alone may endure, the self-luminous, solitary, residuum of eliminations.

The reader may see how involved is this exposition. Monists cannot tolerate a Mind centred on Brahman. They think that the knower, the knowledge and the known are all unreal. They call Brahman luminous, but it is a kind of luminosity that illumines nothing else. There is no object that shines by reason of this Light and there is no person whose eyes respond to this light. Nor does Brahman see itself or any other substance with this light. In short, Brahman is but a brilliant *Kohinoor* supremely dazzling with light but unserviceable for cognizing or illumining the *self* or anything else.

In this view of the Atman, how is it appropriate for Srutis and Smritis to speak of Brahman being *known, seen or cognized*? How is it right that the Geeta text should speak of the "Mind being *fixed in the Atman*" ? Why should the language used mislead the reader into the notion that his mind may be fixed of God, while, in fact and truth, all that the devotee can do is to sweep away from the mind a load of material rubbish?

I have already observed that Madhusoodana and his brethren have left Patanjali alone in this verse. The reason is clear. Patanjali has not expounded Samadhi as such a purely *Negative Process*. He speaks of the Mind being cleared of impurity and being withdrawn from the external world and proceeds then to describe the *Positive* process of one-pointedness. So does the Geeta verse also. For, in the first line उपरमेत् advises "Withdrawal" corresponding to प्रशान्तवाहिता (Chapter III-10, of Patanjali) and the second line advises 'one-pointedness' आत्मसंस्था. Adwaitic commentators do not see that if Meditation is purely and entirely 'Negative' in character, the first line of the Geeta would have sufficed and the second line would be superfluous.

Madhusoodana thinks that the second line of the verse under notice relates wholly to the seer-in-trance. He is the individual who has, according to him, cleared out all the rubbish from the mind and purged it of its material constitution, so that the self-luminous Brahman may endure unencumbered and uneclipsed. Neelakanta thinks, however, that this second line of the verse mentions two different stages of Samadhi. He thinks that आत्मसंस्थ is the cognitive trance, संप्रज्ञात, in which the seer is partly awake and there exist still in his mind traces and vestiges of the experiences gone through in the past. In his view, न किंचिदपि चिन्तयेत् is the final stage, असंप्रज्ञात, in which all trace of the world is totally extinct.

In commenting on उपरमेत् of the first line and explaining to us the slow process of "gradual withdrawal," Madhusoodana quotes some passages of Kataka and other Upanishads which speak of the gradation of senses, sense-objects, the Mind, the Buddhi, the Mahat, the Avyakta, and the Purursha, in an ascending scale of superiority (analogous to what is spoken of in verses 41 and 42, chapter III, the Bhagavad Geeta). Adverting to these, Madhusoodana says that the seer should get his senses and sense-objects dissolved in the Mind, get the Mind dissolved into Mahat, (which he identifies with Ahankara in a sense) and get the latter merged in the Atman. The 'gradual withdrawal' denotes, as he puts it, that the seer should achieve conquest step by step on each of these four planes.

There is no need to follow Madhusoodana in his elaborate details on this point. But the Sruti passage deals with *Involuation and Evolution* and the presiding deities of each distinct principle of Nature. The Geeta text, however, does not seem to advert here to that point at all. Whereas the verse speaks of the Mind being helped by '*discriminative reason*', the Sruti relates to the Mind being the offspring of, and becoming extinct in, Buddhi taken as a categorical Principle of Material Nature. Madhusoodana confuses "Ahankara" with Mahat.

The distinction between them is well-known and is based on erudite Sankhya expositions. Madhusoodana has coolly overthrown established notions on the subject without any authority. Space

forbids further discussion. The reader may, it is requested, look through the notes on verses Nos. 41 and 42 of chapter III and judge for himself whether the verse under comment adverts to the gradations implied in the Involution and Evolution of cosmic matter.

I see that Venkatanath is becoming more and more an admirer of Madhusoodana's. He used to criticize Madhusoodana here and there in chapter II. But gradually he has drifted into warm admiration and whole-hearted surrender, so that, he indulges in copying the other's commentary wholesale, and claims credit, evidently, for originality. The present verse is an appropriate instance of such a plagiarism. Why would he not refer to Madhusoodana by name and pen at least a feeble note of indebtedness?

26) यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

यतःयतः	... wherever
निश्चरति	... roams out
मनः	... the Mind
चञ्चलम्	... the wavering
अतिस्थिरम्	... unsteady
ततः, ततः	... therein
नियम्य	... controlling

एतत्	... this
आत्मनि	... on God
एव	... alone
वशं	... dependent
नयेत्	... shall cause

“Wherever the Mind, naturally wavering, roams out getting unsteady, *therein*, controlling it, the Yogin shall cause it to rest on God alone.”

The last verse advised the Yogin to abide in God and think of nothing else. But the advice is more easily given than carried out, because the Mind is such a wavering thing. To roam is its characteristic. It is restless except in profound sleep. Hence it is a stupendous achievement, if it could ever be got to rest on a single object and remain firm.

Sri Krishna therefore proceeds to give some more lessons of practical advice to guide the Yogin in his effort. He told him in the last verse to proceed *gently, slowly and by degrees*. Now He says, “If the mind wanders into a field of pleasure, attracted by the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue or the touch, catch hold of the mind and turn it towards God. A general or universal determination never to go after any pleasure is too hard to carry out.

It is too comprehensive and too vague to admit of practical fulfilment. It will remain but a pious resolve more honored in the breach than in the observance. Hence the advice is given that whenever the person

chances to be thrown into contact with a pleasure-giving experience, the Yogin should at once check his mind and purify it of the desire.

Each endeavour will then be a source of strength and will make the next one easier until the habit of control is well established. The host of allurements is so large and so powerful that each unit has to be tackled individually and by degrees.

The senses of knowledge are so many gates of egress to the Mind. It is easy to render the first line of the text to mean that whenever the Mind tries to go out *through any particular gate-way of sense* it is to be held back and prevented from passing out of such opening. In this way, it is prevented from coming into contact with the external source of pleasure. यतोयतः निश्चरति will thus mean "Through which-ever sense the Mind tries to go out." Sri Madhwa does not adopt this construction.

His view may be thus stated. The mental conquest we are dealing with comprises the *purification* of the Mind as well as its restraint. It is, no doubt, a great thing to keep it indoors, as it were, and prevent its egress through the avenue of the sense-organs. But it is equally necessary that it should be kept intrinsically pure so that it may not brood over memories of past pleasures and experiences. Hence we do not bring out the full force of the text by interpreting it to mean simply that the Mind should be checked from time to time and prevented, *whenever* it tries to, from straying away. If यतोयतो means, on

the other hand, "*wherever*," Sri Madhwa points out, the full force of the lesson is clear. "*In whichever sensual pleasure the Mind attempts to indulge, therein it should be ruled and purified*" is the purport.

It is the double aspect of "withdrawal" and "devotion" that is insisted on throughout. One is negative and the other is positive. The last clause of the verse आत्मन्येव वशं नयेत् insists on absolute devotion. The Yogin is advised to cause his Mind to rest entirely in God. It may stray away again and again. But, as often as it does so, he should bring it back and put it under the magnetic influence of God. Other commentators render आत्मना to mean the *self*. Sri Madhwa renders that word to denote God throughout in this context.

The first line contains two words which seem redundant. चञ्चलं and अस्थिरं apparently mean the same thing, *viz.*, that the mind is *unsteady*. In Vivriti, the difference between the two is pointed out to the effect that the former states the *naturally* unsteady and wandering character of the Mind and that the latter word states its unsteadiness under the attraction of an external cause. That it is *intrinsically* of an unsteady disposition furnishes the reason why it is so easily led away by causes small or great.

In this explanation of the apparently redundant words Sreedhara agrees, as well as Ramanujacharya and Sankaracharya.

Madhusoodana (whom Venkatanatha meekly copies) goes into the subtleties of Yoga Shastra to find out the difference. He points out that Samadhi, the meditative trance, is neither *wakefulness* nor *sleep*. To be wakeful means a high-strung activity of the Mind when thousands of distractions engage attention.

To be asleep is also a mental condition hostile to Meditation. The Former is विक्षेप. The latter is लय. Samadhi is inconsistent with both these states. This being so, चञ्चल in the text denotes the activity of विक्षेप and अस्थिरं stands for the inactivities of *and allied states*, लय. Having set out this in broad outline, Madhusoodana proceeds to quote five verses of Gowdapada in support of his view and writes an elaborate commentary of the same. We are not concerned with the verses of Gowdapada nor with his views as Madhusoodana has presented them. But Gowdapada's verses do not purport to be an exposition of the Geeta text. His verses deal with Adwaita and he adopts so much of Patanjali's Yoga as in his opinion lends support thereto.

This Geeta text, however, with which alone we are concerned, contains not a syllable about 'Unity with Brahman' which Gowdapada prominently insists on. It may be that विक्षेप and लय are both hostile to समाधि as a fact of Yogic Science. Whether Sri Krishna intended to denote these two technical ideas by the words चञ्चलं and अस्थिरं is more than doubtful. Why the Lord should have chosen these two plain terms

and eschewed the technical words विक्षेप and लय it is difficult to see, if Madhusoodana's view be sound.

The drift of the present context is far from obscure. Some of the verses such as Nos. 18,19,20,21, and 22 of this chapter were pitched on a high key. They dealt with the well-poised Samadhi where *one-pointed meditation* prevails to the exclusion of विक्षेप and लय. Other verses such as 10, 11,12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 dealt with preliminaries and preparations such as solitude, posture, food and abstinence. These are obviously lessons conceived on a lower key. Verse 25 is to be read as a lesson in the preparatory stage. The Lord sets up the goal in some verses and intersperses His lessons with frequent advice as to how to proceed. In verse 25 he dwells on the desirability of proceeding slowly and by degrees. The present verse dwells on the desirability of resisting *each mental inclination as it arises*, acquiring and strengthening the habit and the discipline of mental withdrawal and restoring the Mind to the groove of Diving Meditation.

In these lessons of practical advice addressed to be young practitioner and intended to help him out of initial difficulties, it is not necessary or appropriate that the condition prevailing on the eve of the goal, *viz.*, utter dislodgment of विक्षेप and लय, should be alluded to. Therefore Vivriti Acharya, Sreedhara and Ramanujacharya account for चञ्चलं and by अस्थिरं by adopting a non-technical import.

27) प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥

प्रशान्तमनसं	... of quiescent Mind
हि	... indeed
एनं	... this
योगिनं	... Yogin
सुखं	... joy
उत्तमं	... Supreme
उपैति	... befalls, overtakes
शान्तरजसं	... of subdued Rajo-guna
ब्रह्मभूतं	... resting in Brahman
अकल्मषं	... the faultless

“Supreme joy overtakes this Yogin whose Mind is quiescent, whose Rajasa quality is conquered, who rests in Brahman, and who is faultless.”

It is but appropriate that immediately after lessons in Yoga practice, the reward in store for the Yogin should be stated. This was indeed mentioned in a way in verse No.21. But the treatment of the subject will not be complete without the reward being prominently drawn attention to in this connection. The Lord says, “Supreme is the joy of one who has reached success in yogic efforts”. This success means (1) Fixity of thought in God and (2) mental conquest

in relation to everything else. ब्रह्मभूत describes the former. The three epithets (1) प्रशान्तमनसं (2) शान्तरजसं and (3) अकल्मषं describe the latter.

ब्रह्मभूतं is naturally welcomed by the Sankara School as an expression of Adwaita. Sankaracharya construes it to denote the seer who is convinced that he and all else is nothing but Brahman. Others follow this line of thought and apply the term to the seer who has become Brahman.

But ब्रह्मभूतं is only one of many similar expressions in this context. Verse No.7 spoke of God (परमात्मा) being *present in* the seer. Verse 14 said "The Yogin shall sit thinking of *Me* (God) and devoted to *Me*." Verse 15 said "He comes to abide *in Me*." Verses 18,20, and 25, also spoke of the yogin being established and rejoicing *in the Atman*. Cogency and consistency requires ब्रह्मभूत to be construed on the same footing as the rest, to denote worshipful devotion unto God rather than a transformation into God.

Desikar feels some difficulty in reconciling the expression ब्रह्मभूतं with the tenets of his school. Ramanujacharya's main idea of Yoga seems to be 'self-realization'. By this, he means the realization that the Spirit is totally distinct from Matter. Desikar says that the sage is here called ब्रह्मभूत not because he *becomes* Brahman, but because he has realized his own individuality as something other than Non-Brahman.

Matter is Non-Brahman. He who eschews matter on the ground that it is Non-Brahman is, by courtesy, described in the text as ब्रह्मभूत. This is one idea.

There is another too under the same word, according to Desikar. The Jeeva is atomic in size. But by its quality, merits and virtues, it is Infinite. ब्रह्म denotes, literally, *what is grown great*, i.e., the infinite. The Jeeva is Brahman in this sense, in spite of being atomic and although it is other than God.

I do not see any god reason for this twisted annotation. If God and the Jeeva be distinct from Matter, why should the yogin be called *Brahman*, simply to differentiate him from Matter?

In fact, there is no point here in inviting attention to the distinction between the soul and the body. The whole theme is one of Meditation addressed to God. In this theme, there is no need or occasion to allude to materialism and to speak of the sage as having got over the same. The alternative explanation that the Jeeva is 'Infinite' although atomic in size, is equally unsustainable. For, the Jeeva is far from Infinite in qualities or attributes. He is an atom in size as well as in qualities. His only 'Infiniteness' is in time. In other respects, he is but an atom compared to God. I fail to see why Desikar should fight shy of the plain meaning that the Yogin is ब्रह्मभूत because he rests on and is fixed in Brahman.

Of the epithets (1) प्रशान्तमनसं, (2) शान्तरजसं and अकल्मषं, their relation is not obscure. In chapter III, verse 37, Sri Krishna pointed out that anger and other vices were the bring of Rajo-guna (कामएष क्रोधएष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः). The Yogin under notice having triumphed over Rajas (शान्तरजसं), is naturally free from कल्मष or faults that are born thereof. Thus शान्तरजसं and अकल्मषं go together and exclude all the possible failings of an agitated and distracted mind. From these, follows the state known as प्रशान्तमनः. So long as the mind is dominated by Rajas, and continues impure, peace is unknown. But as soon on as the said domination and impurity vanish, a subline peace follows, प्रशान्ति. In this condition, the Mind ceases to be a vagabond. It is no longer necessary to put it under forced restraint. The 'out-going' tendency itself disappears, so that it remains quiet, like the tortoise which has easily and automatically withdrawn its limbs. In the स्थितप्रज्ञ section of chapter II, the reader may see the distinction pointed out that whereas the seeker puts forth great effort to restrain the senses and the mind, the Seer accomplishes this feat almost involuntarily. प्रशान्तमनसं in the text points to this characteristic of the Seer.

Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha continue, in this verse, the train of thought emphasized by them in the last foregoing verse under the words चञ्चलं and

अस्थिरं. The reader will remember how these two words were construed to mean the mental sates known in Yoga Shastra as विक्षेप and लय. In the present text, these commentators say that शान्तरजस denotes absence of विक्षेप and अकल्मष denotes absence of लय (sleep, languor, indolence, etc.). From the absence of these mental moods, it follows that the Yogin is प्रशान्तमनाः by which expression is meant "having a mind that has ceased to function". The effect of the three epithets is that the yogin has reached the topmost step, has *become* Brahman, and is nothing but bliss unalloyed.

Enough has been said in the last verse itself about the inappropriateness of too largely indenting on the technique of Yoga Shastra. The words शान्तरजस and अकल्मष are no more capable of meaning विक्षेप and लय, than are चञ्चलं and अस्थिरं of the last verse. We found that, determined to force the yogic ideas in, Madhusoodana resorted to Gaudapada for his rescue, and found congenial matter for comment in his verses rather than in the Geeta text.

What these writers really mean when they speak of the 'Mind ceasing to function' (निर्वृत्तिक), I do not clearly see. On this side of the *Emancipation*, it is impossible to cast away the Mind and get released from it. So long as it sticks and clings to us, it cannot help 'functioning' in some manner or other. If प्रशान्तमनसं means really that the Mind of the Yogin has ceased

to 'function,' it amounts to an annihilation of that useful inward organ. If so, there is no possibility of visioning Brahman ; for, God-vision itself is a function of the Mind so long as the Yogin is alive.

In respect to the Jeevanmukta whose Mind has ceased to be in some inscrutable way, it seems hardly appropriate to say that he has only transcended रजो guna. शान्तरजसं is the description given of him in the text. This implies that *Rajo-guna* is absent in him and, much more so, the quality of Tamas. But सत्त्व is not excluded at all expressly or impliedly. On the other hand it looks as if सत्त्व prominently characterizes the Yogin, its operative effect consisting in luminous God-vision. *Ex hypothesi* if the Yogin's Mind has ceased to function, there is no room for the play of Sattwa also. The Geeta verse under notice speaks 'joy overtaking the Yogin.' (सुखमुपैति). If the Mind be extinct and all functions of knowing or enjoying have ceased, it is impossible that 'joy' can be experienced. Brahman is, no doubt, stated to be 'bliss' itself, and the Yogin has become Brahman. But surely, 'Non-Dualism' does not allow any joy or experience Brahman. Brahman may be 'joy', but is not joyful. The Geeta description सुखं उपैति is not appropriate in speaking of the Yogin getting transferred into 'joy' itself.

Anandagiri says that on the analogy of 'sound sleep' in which the inherent happiness of the spirit is unfolded and experienced although all the inner and outer senses from the 'Mind' downwards are in

abeyance, the Yogin in question comes by joy supreme. But the analogy is misleading. In sound sleep an actual experience of happiness is conceded. In the Brahmic state no experience is possible.

Moreover there seems to be a sharp difference of opinion between Anandagiri and Madhusoodana in respect to the *happiness* the Yogin plunged in trance. Madhusoodana's position (N.B. this is very clear from what he says under the next verse) may be stated thus :— "In Samadhi, the mind ceases to function, but the Mind itself does not cease to be, as in the case of profound sleep. By the Mind existing thus in a subtle state, happiness is experienced." On the other hand, Anandagiri thinks that in Samadhi there is *no Mind nor mental function*, and the condition is akin to profound sleep so that the happiness of Samadhi is *purely spiritual* in which the Mind has no concern whatever.

Sankaracharya has not in this verse indulged in flights of annotation based on Yoga Shastra. In his Bhashya, there is no reference to an 'unfunctioning Mind' nor to the disappearance of *विक्षेप* and *लय*. *शान्तरजसं* is rendered in the plain sense of "one whose Rajasic faults such as ignorance and sorrow have been attenuated." *अकल्मष* is by him rendered to denote the relinquishment of *Dharma and Adharma*.

Madhusoodana puts aside the commentary of Sankaracharya and prefers to read details of Yoga Shastra into the Geeta. Venkatanath simply copies

Madhusoodana, attracted evidently by the originality and ingenuity of the latter. If Sri Madhwa had attempted any such feat, Venkatanath would have come down with a volley of criticism against such an unwarranted torture of the text.

But Madhusoodana feels, in all conscience, that Sankaracharya's note on the word अकल्मष is not to be overlooked. Hence as an alternative exposition he adopts Sankara Bhashya and construes अकल्मष to denote "absence of Dharma and Adharma". But Venkatanatha does not notice this alternative comment.

As to Sankara Bhashya which speaks of the Yogin giving up Dharma and Adharma, this raises a moot point of controversy. According to Sri Madhwa, no sage or seer gives up Dharma wholesale. Whatever impedes his way to Moksha, he gives up. But what is not an impediment is not so given up by him. Even after God-vision, he does perform Dharma and is rewarded with enhanced bliss in Moksha, (see under verse 50, chapter II). The impurity or fault adverted to in the word अकल्मष is said to be 'Dualism' in the opinion of Sankarananda. This writer is an adept in forcing 'Non-Dualism' into any word.

The reader is requested to mark the predicate सुखमुपैति. The Lord says that 'happiness *approaches* the yogin'. The progress of the Yogin proceeds step by step. From slow beginnings and persevering endurance, the Yogin marches forward fighting his way inch

by inch and making conquest bit by bit. When success is within sight he comes upon the dawn of a supreme indescribable joy. This, however, is but the dawn. It is not yet the full sunshine. As the singular experience develops, the happiness too becomes established, and this point is going to be touched on in the next verse.

What kind of happiness the Yogin-in-trance enjoys, none but the Yogin can say. But it does not appear to be the happiness of *sleep* or *swoon*, nor is it the bliss such as of emancipated souls. The Yogin's Mind is not yet extinct. He sees God with his Mind. The Mind is still quite alive and active, though introspectively bent. It is not diverted by the external world nor is it in total suspension as is the case in profound sleep. In this condition, the Yogin feels happiness *with his Mind*. His joy is thus not wholly of spiritual composition but the joy such as of Prahlada and Dhruva and all true Bhaktas who sing and dance to the tune of high devotion.

28) एवं युंजन्सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।

सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥

एवं	... Thus
युंजन्	... meditating
सदा	... always
आत्मानं	... on God

योगी	... the Yogin
विगतकल्मषः	... rid of impurity
सुखेन	... easily
ब्रह्मसंस्पर्श	... consequent on contact with Brahman
अत्यन्तं	... unlimited
सुखं	... happiness
अश्नुते	... enjoys

“Thus meditating constantly on God, the Yogin being rid of impurity easily enjoys unlimited bliss brought by on contact with Brahman.”

On a superficial reading, this verse looks very much like the last one. But on a closer view, the difference is clear. After giving some practical lessons of advice to the novitiate, the last verse brought the Yogin to the threshold of a bliss supreme. That thread is now continued. Introduced to a bliss unexperienced before, we are told that the Yogin is soon absorbed in the new experience. He gets into Samadhi more often, and plunges into the trance more intensely. Exertion is no longer necessary.

The taste of the supreme bliss is a sufficient impetus for repeating the *Yoga* again and again. The practice thus continued culminates in an unceasing contemplation of God. With the ever-increasing acquisition of the psychic power of concentration, the faults of the flesh get weaker and thinner down to the vanishing point. With ease, the Yogin is then able

to grasp the great bliss. It is not the bliss of the flesh but a kind of unspeakable happiness that the Divine contact evokes.

It may be seen thus that the present verse is a logical continuation of the last one and gives us a fuller description of the great bliss enjoyed by a full-grown Yogin.

The reader will lay due emphasis on the word सदा (constantly) in the verse. It qualifies (i) युजन्, (ii) आत्मानं (iii) ब्रह्मसंस्पर्श and (iv) अश्नुते so that we learn that the meditation of God the enjoyment of ecstasy are both unintermittent.

ब्रह्मसंस्पर्श is construed by the members of the Sankaracharya school to mean that the Yogin and his bliss are *identical with Brahman*. It is not *contact* but *identity* that is denoted by the word संस्पर्श, according to them. That this is not the literal meaning of the word must, in fairness, be conceded by every Sanskrit scholar although the exigencies of Adwaita demand the twist.

The text lays much emphasis on God as the centre and focus of the Yogin's Meditation. आत्मानं and ब्रह्मसंस्पर्श make this point sufficiently clear. It may not be without interest to the reader to compare and distinguish Sri Krishna's Yoga from Patanjali's in this connection.

On two points there seems to be a vital difference: (1) Whereas Sri Krishna repeatedly insists on

God as the only proper focus of concentration, Patanjali takes up a different position. (2) Whereas Sri Krishna speaks repeatedly of a bliss unspeakable in the Yogic state, Patanjali's goal is silent on the point.

I must hasten, however, to point out that Patanjali does not ignore God altogether. In the first chapter of his work, he recounts many a method for training the Mind into meditation. Out of many, he counts 'devotion to God' as one. 'ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा' is his aphorism No.23 in chapter I. It means "Or by a profound contemplation of God." The reader will, please, mark the little word 'Or.' Divine contemplation is here stated to be one out of many alternative methods. Aphorisms Nos. 24, 25, 26 and 27 deal with God. No.29, chapter I, runs thus : 'ततः प्रत्यक्चेतनाधिगमोऽप्यन्तरायाभावश्च' which means that "from a meditation of God follows the knowledge of the *Individual Self* and the disappearance of impediments." Here we have to pause a bit. The reward of Divine meditation is here stated to be "the knowledge of the individual self," i.e., of the Jeeva. To realize *the self* is thus of higher value and importance than to know God. Again, God is to be thought of not for His own sake or for His Grace or for Moksha, but for the removal of obstacles.

Let us follow Patanjali a little more. Proceeding to enumerate more methods, he suddenly allows the Yogin to meditate *not necessarily on God but on any object he pleases*. यथाभिध्यानाद्वा is his aphorism No.39,

chapter I, which means "Or by meditating according to one's predilection."

Thus the stand-point of Patanjali with reference to God is very different from that of Sri Krishna. In the Yoga of Sri Krishna, God is all in all. Nothing but the Meditation of God is of any value. Divine Grace is to be sought for at every step.

As for 'happiness' rewarding the labours of the Yogin, Patanjali is very reticent to the end of his work. To know the distinctness of the Individual soul (Jeeva) from Matter is the goal. There is no bliss, no joy, no happiness, in this realization. But Sri Krishna takes occasion to repeat this lesson as often as possible that joy ineffable marks the Samadhi contemplation of the sage.

Barring some essential tenets like these, no Vedantin objects to the principles and practice of Ashtanga Yoga. These may be true enough as facts of psychology or hypnotism. For instance, there is no need to differ from Madhusoodana who construes सुखेन in the Geeta text to mean "the absence of Yogic obstacles" dwelt on at great length by Patanjali. For example, chapter I, verse 30, says that "Disease, languor, indecision, carelessness, sloth, sensuality, delusion, missing the point and instability, are among the obstacles." The practice of Yoga, of course, becomes easy if these impediments be out of the way.

There is therefore no objection to the word सुखेन denoting absence of such obstacles. Then again, there

is the word विगतकल्मष in the text. Patanjali dwells much on the moral value of certain virtues to qualify the Mind for moral Meditation. *Vide* aphorism 33, chapter I, which lays down how the Yogin should cultivate habits of friendliness, compassion, complacency, and callousness towards various kinds of virtue or vice. Patanjali proves that high-toned altruism has a remarkable effect in purifying the Mind. No exception need be taken to explanation based on these ethical or scientific ideas.

Neither Sankaracharya nor Ramanujacharya has cared to borrow much from Patanjali. But Madhusoodana and Venkatanath have done so very largely, and especially so, in the present context. Having regard to this fact, I have ventured to draw attention to some essential points of divergence between Geeta and Patanjali's work.

29) सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

सर्वभूतस्थं	... staying in all Beings
आत्मानं	... God
सर्वभूतानि	... all Beings
च	... and
आत्मनि	... in God
ईक्षते	... sees

योगयुक्तात्मा	... possessed of a Mind devoted to Yoga
सर्वत्र	... everywhere
समदर्शनः	... seer of an equal Providence

“Possessed of a mind trained in Yoga, the seer sees God’s equal presence everywhere. He sees God in all beings and all Beings in God’.

Sri Krishna proceeds to touch on “the object of Meditation” by a few verses in concluding the topic. It is not to be understood that He has, as yet, said nothing of this. But here its appropriateness is obvious, forming, as it does, the finishing stroke an important thesis.

The Bhakta worships God in various ways. For instance, verse 29, chapter V, referred to God as being the enjoyer and acceptor of all Yagnas and Penance, as being the Supreme cause all causes, and the Friend of all Beings. That is one way of worship. The Yogin of highly developed mental concentration obtains an extremely subtle vision able to detect God in everything. He is a spiritual adept who has no need for idols and images to aid him in Pooja. The universe is a huge image for him and he sees God in that huge image. He not only sees God in everything but sees everything resting in Him. God being subtler than the subtlest and grosser than the grossest, the averment is conceivable that He is in every thing and every thing is *in* Him.

Why is it stated that the *Yogin* sees God in this particular manner ? Is this not the way every believer and theist looks on the relation between God and the world? The answer is that the Yogin's vision is not the ordinary vision. The Yoga Shashtra traces the Yogin's Mind from its gross distracted beginnings to the subtle superfine culture of trance. In this last condition, its power of vision is inconceivably great and fine.

It embraces all the facts and things of the past, present and future. Walls and distances do not matter to the Yogic Mind. Nature stands before it like transparent mirror. Taking note of this psychological fact and applying it to the religious Meditator, Sri Krishna points out that the man reaps the full advantage of mental eyes thus equipped with subtlety and strength. In the entire panorama of Nature unfolded before his gaze, with the infinite phenomena thereof unveiled, the Yogin *sees*, in a way that ordinary eyes can never see, the central figure of all, namely God, equally distributed throughout. He alone realizes how God is infinite in size, form, strength, knowledge and every other attribute, whether He be traced to the minutest atom of matter or to the biggest object of Nature.

Emphasis is to be marked here on two points: (i) the relation between God and the world ; and (ii) the *aliqueness* of God everywhere, it being totally inadmissible to think of any inequality between any two Forms of Divinity.

Ramanujacharya takes the word आत्मानं to mean the Jeeva. In his view, all Jeevas are, in essence, equal. No doubt, infinite Jeevas fill the space. But regarded in their pristine purity, they are equal to one another, being composed of the same spiritual essence, Sat, Chit, Ananda. Inequality is only in the field of Matter. Sheathed in Matter and coloured by its tinges, the encased and distracted Jeeva exhibits inequality, and this accounts for the infinite gradations that mark things as we see in the world. Not only are all Jeevas equal in essence but they are equal to God Himself in their state of Freedom (Mukti).

This being the main article of Ramanujacharya's system, Sri Krishna is supposed in the text to give expression to this tenet. The Yogin is supposed to see all Beings in his own *Self* (आत्मन्) and his *own self* in all beings as well. In other words the Yogin finds all Jeevas equal and similar.

As stated above, Sri Madhwa takes आत्मन् to denote God. In this rendering, the sense has been set out.

It seems to me that to take आत्मन् to mean the individual soul is not sound, for obvious reasons.

(i) The language of the text is dead against it, naturally interpreted. It speaks of all 'beings' being in a single Atman. How is it right to call the Atman of A or B to be immanent in other beings than A or B? It is similarly inadmissible to think all Beings resting in one Atman such as of A or B.

(ii) This unsound construction is resorted to on a wrong theory that Yoga means '*Self-Realization*' and that the *Yogin* therefore has nothing to do with anything but *Self*. It is incomprehensible why the *Yogin* should regard himself so alienated from God.

(iii) In Ramanujacharya's system, the Jeeva is atomic in size and occupies a petty little spot. With this theory, the statement in the text that *he* is in all beings and all *beings* are in *him* is not reconcilable.

(iv) Desikar says that, although the *Yogin* knows his own '*Self*' alone, he may be *deemed* to have known all the Jeevas, just as a merchant examines only a few grains of sample-paddy and judges of the rest aright. But the analogy is very feeble.

The Geeta text is framed on the lines of similar Mantras. (*Vide* Isavasya Mantras, Nos. 6 and 7). Other parallel verses too may be quoted in plenty. Some are quoted in my Sanskrit work.

(v) In fact, the next verse of the Geeta (*i.e.*, No.30) drops the word आत्मन् and uses the word '*Me*' in its place. Sri Krishna being the antecement, it is obvious that God's omnipresence is meant and not Jeevic similarity.

In the school of Sankaracharya, there is no room for this controversy, because, to them, there is but one soul everywhere and there is no difference between God and Jeeva.

Agreeably to their own creed, they evolve Monism out of the text in their usual way. "Atman is in all Beings" is understood by them to mean that 'Atman alone is true and the *'Beings'* adverted to are unreal'. Conversely, 'all Beings are in the Atman' means the same thing that the former is false and the latter is true. Little effort is made to distinguish between the two clauses. सम is understood to mean not 'equal', but the *unconditioned*.

The language of the verse impedes these feats of construction. But all the members of the school have, however, performed them.

Neelakanta points attention to the distinction between the संप्रज्ञात Yogin and the असंप्रज्ञात Yogin here. The former lives and moves in the world. To him, *Brahman* appears in the visible shapes and forms of the world. He sees *Brahman transposed into the world*. But the seer-in-trance confronts a situation just the reverse of it. He ignores the world and sees all reduced to *Brahman*. He rejects everything as unreal and, after a process of universal elimination, sees *Brahman* alone. Although in substance the two positions may resemble, there is some difference in the points of view. Hence the text says सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं to denote the former point of view and सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि to denote the latter. Neelakanta accounts for सर्वत्र समदर्शनः by saying that it denotes the attitude of the seer during his hours of wakefulness.

Madhusoodana indents on तत्त्वमसि for an explanation of the verse under notice and the next two verses. The meaning of त्वं, according to Non-Dualism, is Brahman stripped of limitations. The meaning of तत् is also Brahman unalloyed. The former is the name of Brahman shadowed and coloured by Phenomena. The latter is the name of Brahman coloured as Iswara. Stripped of all shadows and colours, the Atman is but *one* (असि). Madhusoodana takes hold of त्वं, तत् and असि, applies them respectively to this verse (No.29) and the two succeeding ones. (Verses 30 and 31). The reader may turn to No.30 for a moment and see that it deals with Iswara (तत्).

In these renderings (of Neelakanta and Madhusoodana), I see nothing but fancy, occasionally mixed with ingenuity. There is no need to examine the phrases and clauses of the text closely to criticize these views.

Under this verse, Madhusoodana has raised a flutter in his own brotherhood by formulating a singular interpretation. His position may be thus summed up.

“Two distinct persons are adverted to by the words योगयुक्तात्मा and समदर्शनः. The former is the adept who has the heights of Yoga by methods inculcated in Patanjali's Yoga Shastra. The latter is the Vedantin who has thoroughly mastered the Upanishads and

learnt under a preceptor to distinguish between Brahman the real and everything else the unreal. Both these individuals are *seers*, the former by Yogic methods of mental restraint and meditation, and the latter by his sound discrimination. Sri Krishna says in the text that these methods are both *independently* adoptable by the would-be seer for reaching Brahmic knowledge.

By reading the disjunctive particle 'Or' between योगयुक्तात्मा and समदर्शनः, the meaning is deduced that Sri Krishna approves of *Yoga* as well as study as alternatives of equal efficacy. In Vasishta Ramayana, Vasishta says to Rama "there are two paths, *Yoga* and *knowledge* ; some are capable only of Meditation and others are capable only of knowledge. Hence the Great Siva laid down both."

"But properly speaking," (Madhusoodana proceeds to add), " the path of study alone which enables the seer to discriminate the false from the true is the one approved of by Sankaracharya, who (it is said) has nowhere recommended 'Meditative Yoga' to his followers. The reason is this. Founders of *Yoga Shashtra* are Dwaitins. They do not accept the 'unreality' of the world. To them, no other means is available except the one of restraining the Mind and its functions all of which they regard as real. But to the Vedantin, the way is easy. He easily sets aside the mind and its functions as so much falsehood. No *Yoga* meditation is necessary for him. Hence the *Yoga* points out one Path and Sankaracharya points to another'.

This long note of Madhusoodana bristles with flaws: (i) To read the particle 'Or' in the verse as suggested by this writer is unwarranted.

(ii) If the *Yoga of Meditation* is, truly speaking, unnecessary and uncalled for, it was sheer waste of breath for Sri Krishna to have devoted so large a space to ध्यानयोग.

(iii) Madhusoodana blows hot and cold under this verse. He says in one place that the Geeta text simply conveys the same ideas as Patanjali's Aphorisms Nos. I - 47, 48 and 49. When we turn to these aphorisms it turns out that Patanjali is adverting to a sort of psychic power which, it is said, enables the Yogin to know the past, present and future, and become a miniature God and prophet.

It is not Divine Wisdom in the sense in which that is understood by Dwaitins like Madhwas or by Adwaitins. Having thus interpreted the Geeta text as conveying the same notions as Patanjali's aphorisms, Madhusoodana forgets all about it at the end and brushes aside Patanjali as a Dwaitin to whom the path of true Brahmic knowledge was not available.

(iv) Whether Vasishta has laid down two independent paths or not is open to question. But this so-called work is of doubtful authority. We need not digress to discuss this side-issue.

(v) Neelakanta and the author of Utkarsha

Deepika have levelled a plentiful volley of criticism at Madhusoodana. They point out that Madhusoodana has erred in thinking that Sankaracharya has undervalued, or disapproved of, 'Samadhi' (the Yoga of Meditation). They quote the Teacher's passages which emphasize the necessity for Samadhi on the part of the Seeker.

Passages from Upanishads may be largely quoted which deal with the Yoga of Meditation. They lay down the rules of procedure and practice minutely on lines similar to Yoga aphorisms. One such long passage has been quoted in my Sanskrit notes. (Swetaswatara Upanishad). This being so, how is it possible for Sankaracharya to ignore or despise what is approved of and insisted on in Srutis and Smritis?

In verse after verse in this 'Yoga' context, Madhusoodana went on quoting from Patanjali and sought parallel passages for authority. Although analogies and similarities were not wanting, very often Sri Krishna meant one thing and Patanjali, another. Therefore the analogies and similarities found were often more fanciful than real.

Coming to this verse, Madhusoodana has confounded the Brahmic vision of the Seer with the psychic insight of Patanjali's Yogin, and quoted aphorisms of Patanjali in explanation and support of the Geeta text.

Then, all of a sudden, he has taken up the position that either Meditation or Adwaitic study would suffice.

Lastly, he has taken his stand on the view that Vedantins should ignore the Yoga for many reasons and adopt only Adwaitic study.

It is no wonder that Madhusoodana having erred badly in this reasoning Neelakanta and Utkarsha Deepika have severely criticised him.

Venkatanath, the admirer of Madhusoodana, has chosen to keep a stolid silence, not being able to defend his leader.

On the whole, the proper view to take is that Sri Krishna means most seriously that every one should resort to ध्यानयोग for spiritual knowledge and progress. Concentration of Mind is very helpful for mental purity. To meditate on God is a great religious practice.

It is laid down for seekers and seers alike. It supplements study and marks an important advancement in the aspirant's progress. This chapter of Sri Krishna's ध्यानयोग is neither out of place nor useless to the Vedantin. On the other hand, every one is expected to lay it well to heart. This ध्यानयोग is not based on Patanjali or Hairanyagarbha's works but on Srutis and authoritative Smritis. Swetaswatara Upanishad deals with this Yoga very largely. Those who wish to support the Geeta teachings by authorities should resort to the said sources rather than to Patanjali and others.

30) यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥

यः ... whoever
मां ... Me
पश्यति ... sees
सर्वत्र ... everywhere
सर्वं ... all
च ... and
मयि ... in Me
पश्यति ... sees
तस्य ... to him
अहं ... I
न, प्रणश्यामि ... am not lost
सः च ... and he
मे ... to Me
न प्रणश्यति ... is not lost

“Whoever sees Me in all things and all things in Me to him I am not lost nor is he lost to me.”

The Lord uses plainer language. The word आत्मन् being liable to controversy, the Lord refers to the contents of the last verse with ‘Me’ substituted for the *Atman*. In unambiguous words Sri Krishna refers to Himself as Iswara, the Supreme. He says here that

the Yogin sees *Sri Krishna* everywhere. In his subtlest and minutest forms God dwells in all things. In his hugest Form God upholds all things keeping them in his womb. A Form of the latter kind, He exhibited to his mother Yasoda. He is going to exhibit one to Arjuna in chapter XI of the Geeta.

This verse is not a simple recapitulation of the last verse with 'Me' alone substituted for आत्मन्. The second line proceeds to show what is the reward that the Yogin comes by. His deep meditation has made of him a true Bhakta. He has become attached to God so that the silken tie becomes permanent. On the other hand, God comes to regard the Bhakta as peculiarly His own. In an inscrutable way, God identifies Himself with His Bhakta in all concerns and in whatever makes for his weal or woe. In a special sense, the Bhakta comes to possess in God his best philosopher, guide and friend.

The text uses the word 'Lost'. Neither God nor the Jeeva is destructible. Hence this signification is out of place. Not infrequently does the word 'loss' mean disappearance from sight. This is the meaning adopted here by Sankaracharya and Ramanujacharya. But it is not very satisfactory. God is always seeing every one, whether he be a Yogin or not. He is omniscient, and all knowledge is, in His case, direct perception. The averment that God *sees the Yogin* conveys no special significance. Hence the last quarter of the verse in particular is not intelligible.

Sri Madhwa thinks that the word 'lost' is used in a colloquial and popular sense. Speaking of a master and servant who are useless to each other, we say, the Master is non-existent to the servant, if the former is indifferent to the latter, pays not wages and does not give him food and raiment. Conversely, the servant is non-existent to the master, if the former does not render service. The 'loss' in these examples denotes the absence of that element that is the keynote of the relation. God is never lost to His Bhakta because He is ever on the alert to guard and protect him as He was to Prahlada. The Bhakta is never lost to God as the former swerves not from faith and trust, whatever the trials may be that test his loyalty and homage.

Understanding the averment about 'loss' in this popular and figurative sense, the verse lays down, in Sri Madhwa's view, the holy bondage established between God and His worshipper by reason of ध्यानयोग.

Ramanujacharya thinks that this verse points out the spiritual and essential *equality of God and man*. The last foregoing verse having taught the absolute equality and similarity all Jeevas *inter se*, the present verse continues the lesson in respect to God. The Vedic authority which speaks of the absolute equality of all Beings in Mukti is said to be the basis of the text.

It is conceded by Desikar that the plain meaning of verse is that Sri Krishna, the God Supreme, *is within* everything and everything is *within* Him. But this

plain interpretation is rejected for certain queer reasons. One is that Yoga being *Self-realization*, nothing but 'the self' ought to be manifest the Yogin's thoughts. But, on this very ground, the Geeta should here make no allusion to God at all. The equality man and God is consequently quite irrelevant to the topic. Nor is the statement in the second line in point. For, according to Ramanujacharya, it says "God never disappears from the Yogin's eyes and, *vice versa*, the yogin does not disappear too from God's eyes". *Ex hypothesi*, the Yogin not being concerned with anything but 'the self' in respect to his meditation, the face-to-face communion spoken of in the second lesson is far from comprehensible.

Moreover, the last verse spoke of the Yogin seeing the *equality* of all Beings. The present verse states the the *equality* of all Beings and God with a view to confirm the lesson that souls are equal and alike especially on the analogy of things are equal to the same thing (God here) being equal to another. If, after this assertion, the second line of the text says no more than the realization of this very equality, the redundancy is clear.

Sankaracharya's line of thought pursues the same course except for '*identity*' substituted for 'equality'. As all *souls* are but one soul, the result of the Yogin seeing the Atman in everything and everything in the Atman is that he and the Atman never lose sight of each other, they being, in fact one and same indistinguishable Brahman.

In this rendering also, it is difficult to see how the present verse is distinguishable from the last one. Sri Krishna uses the First Person Pronoun. But it has been held that that only denotes Brahman, the Supreme, and not the lower Brahman or Iswara. On a true view of Adwaita, it may be that the Yogin sees Brahman stripped of the super-imposition, just as a man detects the mother-of-pearl stripped of the false silver. Spotting Brahman in this manner, the Yogin may not lose sight of Brahman, so that Brahman is not lost to the Yogin. तस्याहं न प्रशश्यामि is thus accounted for. But in what sense does Brahman, the mother-of-pearl, see the Yogin and never loses sight of him? Brahman sees not and cannot see either the Yogin or anything else for that matter. Hence Monism can ill account for the two propositions set in antithesis in the second line of the text.

To my mind, it is singularly hard to reconcile Monism with this text. For almost every clause here is worded in the dualistic vein. One thing said to be resting in another implies duality. One thing not being lost to another also implies duality.

Madhusoodana obviously feels it difficult to hold that the *First Person Pronoun in the Geeta verse* stands for the Supreme Brahman. Sri Krishna being the speaker, the Pronoun is therefore taken by him to mean the Lower Brahman or Iswara the conditioned, which is the creator, sustainer and destroyer, of the world. Madhusoodana understood the last foregoing verse to be a description of त्वं in तत्त्वमसि. Continuing

the same idea, he takes the present verse to touch on तत् of that sentence (तत्त्वमसि). तत् stands for the Iswara aspect of Brahman. According to Madhusoodana, the realization of Brahman is achievable in two ways : (1) one is by Vedic study ; (2) the other is by introspective Yoga. The former reveals only the त्वं aspect of Brahman. The latter reveals the तत् aspect.

This interpretation of Madhusoodana is criticised by Utkarsha Deepika. It is not admitted by the school that Yogic introspection can produce Monistic Realization. It is the Vedas alone understood in the Advaitic sense that can produce the Realization approved. To Dualists, the rendering of Madhusoodana is likewise open to exception. By them, the distinction of the Higher and Lower Brahman is not accepted. There is radical controversy over the meaning of तत्त्वमसि.

Some inconsistent positions were pointed out under the last verse in respect to Madhusoodana. His note on the present verse brings out a few more in relief. Under the last verse, he started by holding the Yogic seer and the Vedantin as persons treading *two distinct* paths to the goal. Soon, his natural partiality for the Vedantin led him to brush aside 'Yoga' as of little value. Now again, forgets himself and belauds 'Yoga' even at the expense of Vedantic study. His own friends have chosen to criticise and even Venkatanath does not come for his rescue.

31) सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
 सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥

सर्वभूतस्थितं	... abiding in all Beings
यः	... whoever
मां	... Me
भजति	... worships
एकत्वं	... singleness
आस्थितः	... fixed in
सर्वथा	... in whatever manner
वर्तमानः	... living
अपि	... nevertheless
सः	... he
योगी	... the Yogin
मयि	... in Me
वर्तते	... lives

“Whoever, being fixed in My *singleness*, worships Me in all Beings, – that Yogin lives in me, no matter what kind of life he lives.’

The Lord is pressing the doctrine of *Monotheism* home. Verse 29, He asked Arjuna to realize the dependence of the universe on the *Atman*. Then He dropped the word *Atman* and substituted *Himself* in that place. To the true worshipper he assurance is

given that he shall not be lost. 'Loss' is a vague term. In explanation thereof, the present verse says that such a worshipper is bound to reach Heaven and live in the proximity of God, notwithstanding lapses, if any, into which he may slip after God-vision.

It is said of this sage that he sees *Sri Krishna in all Beings*. This is the conviction in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all Beings. It means the rejection of all faiths that rely on Polytheism. Indra, Chandra, Varuna, Kubera, Agni and all, are, truly speaking, but designations of the Supreme God occurring in the Vedas. The sage is the worshipper of this 'God Supreme' – the Deity who is without a peer. In this sense, the text uses the expression एकत्वमास्थितः.

एकत्वं is a tempting word for the Monist. It means 'oneness' literally. The idea is naturally pressed that the Yogin is hereby called upon to take himself and all Beings as *one with God*. But in speaking of this 'Oneness', why should the verse speak of "God *abiding* in all Beings?" Why should the word भजति be used which means '*worships*'? Why should the second line say, "the Yogin lives in Me"?

While there is one word एकत्व which plausibly may lend support to Monism, there are three other expressions at least which signify the distinctness of man and God, the relation being one of *worshipper* and *worshipped*.

As already observed, Madhusoodana has been harping तत्त्वमसि here and applying each limb of this saying to these verses (Nos. 29, 30 and 31). It would appear, according to this writer that the present verse accentuates that part of तत्त्वमसि which relates to 'identity' of God and Man (the असि portion).

It may be remembered in this connection that Madhusoodana formulated two kinds of God-realization, one being what the Yoga of Meditation brings within reach, and the other being what the study of Vedanta brings about irrespective of Yogic practices. In verse 29, he referred to both as of equal efficacy. In verse 30 he laid stress on *Yoga* as the efficient means of visioning God (तत्). Now in dealing with the 'Unity' realization Madhusoodana holds up Vedanta study as the true *path* that leads to this consummation.

It is nothing but fancy to distribute the Geeta verses in this manner and say, now it deals with *Yoga* and now with Vedanta without any rhyme or reason. It is enough that the sub-division of God-realization under the two headings aforesaid is rejected the leading brethren of the same school and is fundamental wrong from the true stand-point of Advaita itself. Then again there is no warrant in the language of the verses to show that Sri Krishna is shifting stand-points from verse to verse so as to cast His pupil about from *Yoga* to Vedanta and from Vedanta to *Yoga*.

While, according to Madhusoodana, the first line of the text under comment deals with the wakeful Vedantin who is studying and thinking over तत्त्वमसि and other Upanishads, Neelakanta thinks, on the other hand, that this very line relates to the seer in-trance who is absorbed in the Realization of Unity by Samadhi. Two such diametrically opposite views of the same text afford cogent proof that the text is worded in a general way and the annotators are forcing pet views into it to their own delectation.

Ramanujacharya is bringing out his doctrine of University equality in this context. The word सम in verse 29 lent room for the idea. He thinks that the Yogin engaged in unconscious meditation visions his own self. This 'vision' takes the shape of a conviction that all Jeevas are *alike and equal* in essence. This is the Self-realization of Yoga. When he is not in trance the idea of equality strongly developed in the trance clings to him so that even then he believes in the Universal Equality. This latter is not Self-realization, strictly speaking, but next door to it.

In Ramanujacharya's view, the Geeta text under notice deals in the first line with the *seer-in-trance* and, in the second line, with the seer awake.

No doubt, Jeevas are atomic in size. But he says it is declared in the Vedas and scriptures that each Jeeva is possessed of *Infinite* attributes in his state of emancipated essence. Like a flame which by itself rests in a corner but fills the room with its rays, so

the Jeeva sheds his Infinity on the Universe and beyond. *Vide* Brahma Sootra प्रदीपबदावेशस्तथाहि दर्शयति (IV-4-15).

Thus, according to this teacher, the Yogin is called on to see himself equal and similar to God and all Beings.

I cannot help observing that the Geeta verses in question lend little support to this doctrine of *Universal equality*. It seems quite inappropriate to read the equality of God and man in the verses 30 and 31 in particular. It is the relation of 'worshipper and worshipped' that is the central idea of the verses.

It is a queer theory that the Jeeva who is atomic is in some inscrutable way 'Infinite.' The analogy of the lamp is misleading. The Brahman Sootra quoted above has been otherwise interpreted by Sri Madhwa. It is agreed on all hands that the said सूत्रं treats of Mukta Jeevas. The emancipated soul is free to roam anywhere, assume any body, and enjoy any pleasure, at will. The query occurs whether incidentally the Jeeva suffers unhappiness too if he chooses to enter into or put on Bodies.

The reply is in the negative. The flame which consists of heat and light permeates the oil and the wick but is not affected by the shape and colour thereof. The oil may be dark and dirty but the flame feeds only on the oily essence. So the Mukta Jeeva is not affected by the incidents of any Body he may choose enter for his own pleasure.

Thus it may be seen that the सूत्र relied on is no authority for the position that the Jeeva is going to be 'Infinite' in power, capacity and attributes, so as to become a peer of God.

Turning to the second line of the Geeta verse, the reader may note that the Yogin is considered *blessed*, whatever be the life he leads. Ordinarily, he is incapable of leaning towards wrong-doing. But Prarabdha is a power. Forced by it, lapses are not impossible even for a sage.

From Brahma Sootra कामकारेणचैके and the Brihadaranya passages connected therewith, it looks as if the seer is free to live any kind of life, good, bad or indifferent, without in the least being tainted by it. This has to be understood with a qualification. No doubt, the mistakes or lapses of the Seer will not impede his way to emancipation. It is the sure reward of God-vision that the seer should necessarily get his Liberation. Nothing can bar his path. But serious acts of vice or crime will affect his bliss Vykunta. They may also, for the moment, produce some kind suffering. Their duration, however, is short and their effect, very temporary.

Sri Krishna says, "whatever his mode of life, he is in Me". The object is to draw prominent attention to the great value 'Devotion'. Such a man is a favourite with God. All his faults will be excused and his liberation is assured.

32) आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥

आत्मौपम्येन	... likening unto oneself
सर्वत्र	... everywhere
समं	... alike
पश्यति	... sees
यः	... whoever
अर्जुन	... O! Arjuna
सुखं	... pleasure
वा	... or
यदि	... may be
वा	... or
दुःखं	... pain
सः	... he
योगी	... the yogin
परमः	... excellent
मतः	... is deemed

“Whoever likens all unto himself and regards others’ pleasure and pain as his own (alike), that man is deemed an excellent yogin.”

Here is the golden rule very well laid down: Where is the man to be found that looks on others’ pleasure and pain as his own? Internal Abhimana colours our

notions of grief and joy. We seldom sympathise with others' griefs unless they are within a charmed circle of so-called relations or friends. Too often we gloat over the unhappiness of so-called relations or friends. Too often we gloat over the unhappiness of so-called enemies. But the true yogin is one who has risen over Abhimana and its offspring love and hate. He looks on all as his brethren. He makes their joy his joy and their grief his grief. He is thus the estimable person who is full of sympathy and kindness. The yogin who has visioned God is the only person that rises to such a moral height.

This is the ethical truth that the verse has given expression to. There is a religious stand-point that Sri Madhwa adopts in the interpretation of this verse. Every theist worships God. The Yogin we have been speaking of is a theist of theists. By long meditation and persistent concentration, he has visioned God. To him, no object is higher than God. He loves God with a degree of fervour that words can hardly describe. He sees God in everything and everything in God. The corollary follows that he has no friend or foe but the lover and hater, respectively, of God.

As far as his own self is concerned, he looks upon all alike, but he looks at the world with glasses coloured by God. He cannot look on a born rogue and sinner with the same eyes of reverence as he does on a brother Bhakta or Yogin. Speaking of Pandavas, Sri Krishna said to Duryodhana, 'I have no enemies or allies. Pandavas are my very life. Whoever hates them, hates me. Whoever follows them, follows me.' The Geeta

verse No.6 of this chapter (Chapter VI) taught the lesson that God is the kinsman of Bhaktas and the enemy of the sinner.

Applying these sentiments here, we see that the yogin makes the pleasure and pain of spiritual brethren alone his own. He is like a fond virtuous wife whose love is so intense that she cannot bear her dear husband traduced. Her very hate is but a manifestation of love.

The verse ends by praising the yogin as '*excellent*.' He is *excellent*, because he is reaping the fruit of Bhakti in the shape of 'universal love.'

By the word परम (excellent) used in the text, is it intended to compare *this yogin* with others mentioned before and mark out his superiority?

The view of Sankaracharya and his followers is to this effect. They think that verses 29,30 and 31 spoke of yogins who have realized Brahman. Verse 31 even spoke of the Yogin's misbehaviour in a strain of apology. It is intended that the yogin now dealt with is superior to all of them because of the ethical elevation he has risen to.

To my mind, this reasoning is not clear. If any one has realized Brahman as stated in verses 29, 30 and 31 and as Monism says he should, it is impossible that he can be an inferior yogin. *The Realization of Unity* makes it impossible that he can 'misbehave'. It is impossible for him to hate any one, for, all are but Brahman. He has reached an intel-

lectual height compared to which ethics and ethical elevations are but tiny mounds. He has transcended all the lower regions and occupies a summit of transcendental elevation. True Monism seems therefore inconsistent if it should elevate a mere *altruist* above the yogin of Adwaitic realization.

Ramanujacharya regards verses 29, 30, 31 and 32 as a description of successive stages in the development of Yoga. He thinks that verse 30 describes a higher stage of Yoga than 29, that 31 is a higher step still, and that the present verse marks the culmination.

I fail to see what expression in the various verse lends support to this theory. One may, for instance, reverse this order without doing any violence to the language employed and say that these verses describe yoga in four *descending* stages. The word परमः will be no obstacle to this construction. For, that word does not necessarily imply degrees of comparison.

This Teacher does not interpret the text as an enunciation of the 'golden rule' usually understood. He does not look on it as an exhortation addressed to the yogin or any one else to regard others' pleasure and pain as his own. The meaning of the text, according to him, may be stated thus :-

"The ignorant man, A, is elated or depressed by joy or grief occasioned, for instance, by the birth of a son or his death. This joy or grief affects none but A. But, truly speaking, it should not affect A either,

for joys and griefs have nothing to do with the soul. The Yogin takes up the true attitude. When any occasion of joy or grief occurs to him, he regards it with the same indifference as if it occurred to some one else, because he has understood the true nature of the Atman”.

In this exposition, the point brought out is the Yogin's *stoic indifference* and not a heart brimming over with sympathy and love. To endure pairs of opposites is a lesson repeatedly taught. Is this the lesson taught again? There was apparently no need for it.

The text says that the yogin “likens every one to himself.” What is he supposed to do after instituting this comparison? The answer is said to be, “He bears joys and griefs with stoicism.” If so, there is no need to compare others to himself. He has already seen his own Atman by Yoga and understood that that Atman is so pure in essence as to be unrelated to joys and griefs. This realization is quite enough to make him a stoic, without more. He need not trouble himself about others' Atmans in order to be indifferent to his own joys and griefs.

It is one thing to regard others like one's own self; it is quite another thing to be indifferent to all joys and griefs. The former is the attitude of the benefactor. The latter is hostile to sympathy as it breeds callousness. It seems to me that the former is the true idea of the text and that Ramanujacharya's rendering has gone on a wrong track in support of the latter position.

Sankarananda has adopted a view that resembles Ramanujacharya's to some extent. He too harps on the idea of 'endurance' on the footing that the Atman is not related to joys and griefs.

A school of annotators led by Madhusoodana hunt up the Yoga Shastras for finding parallel sentiments to support the Geeta teachings as far as possible. In the present instance, they quote the aphorism of Patanjali, मैत्रीकरुणामुदितोपेक्षाणां सुखदुःखपुण्यापुण्यविषयाणां भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनं which says that whenever the mind is unsteady by season of wrong impulses, it should be made to cultivate 'friendliness, compassion, sympathy and indifference, according as the object is virtue or vice'.

This aphorism advises the Yogic practitioner, yet in the threshold, to cultivate ethical habits and eschew vice. This is one method out of many to check the mind. Patanjali is not here dealing with the accomplished Yogin whose meditation has resulted in God-vision. This is enough to show that the 'excellent' yogin spoken of in the text is not the 'practitioner' dealt with in the Yoga Sootra. Moreover, the Yoga Sootra advises some virtues to be practised, and calls on the practitioner to avoid the wicked. The Geeta verse, on the other hand, expects the *yogin* to make others' weal and woe his own. The difference is clear.

Madhusoodana has a long note on this verse. Venkatanatha copies him without question. The contents of this note are so strained and far-fetched

that hardly a single sentiment thereof could be traced to the language of the text. In criticising Sri Madhwa, Venkatanath often pleads for plain words being taken in a plain sense. If it had been Sri Madhwa instead of Madhusoodana, Venkatanatha would have burst out with rage and hurled his criticism with vehemence. As it is, it happens to be his own leader Madhusoodana to whom he (Venkatanath) is greatly indebted and especially so in this chapter.

I venture to state briefly what Madhusoodana and Venkatanath distill from the verse under notice. "The Yogin is divisible into two groups : the *low* and the *high*. In the present verse, the 'high' yogin is treated of. His characteristics are three : (1) he has known and realized Monism, (2) his Mind is vanquished and annihilated and (3) his hoarded experiences have been rooted out and effaced. Study produces the first qualification. Yoga (Meditation) produces the second. Opposing experiences sedulously created and cultivated produce the third.

The Yogin whose bookish learning has led to the first equipment is but a 'low' Yogin. One who combines all the three is a 'high' Yogin. The hoard of imbedded experiences which have to be destroyed marks the climax of the Yogin's achievement. If an instinct impels to a crime, a counter-impulse of nobility and virtue should be created and the former neutralized. The result produced by the destruction of वासना: is that the Yogin enjoys great bliss as a Jeevan-Mukta. Past experience and imbedded impressions

of the mind stand in the way of pure happiness. If one wishes to be a Jeevan-Mukta and enjoy pure happiness as such, वासनाs should be assailed and killed. If one does not care to become a Jeevan-Mukta but is content to reach Mukti in due course after the termination of the current life, it is enough that he is a Monist who has realized Oneness. The Geeta text under notice refer to the state of the 'high' Yogin who seeks Jeevan-Mukti and incidental bliss".

This, in brief, is the purport and the drift. In the course of the long note, various points have been touched on which seem to make out that the Yogin ought to give as wide a berth the Shastras and Vedas as to worldly pursuits. I need not pursm these details.

It is something of a revelation that, in the school of Non-dualism, the Monist who has *realized* Oneness is still but 'low' Yogin. One would have thought that unless his mind was subdued and the hoarded experiences (वासनाः) were clean out of the way, he would not get to the *Summum Bonum* of realized Adwaita at all.

As regards the text, it is thought that it is tackling the problem of वासनाक्षय for the 'high' Yogin. I am surprised to see that not a word in the verse denotes वासना or its क्षय. The verse speaks of the Yogin treating others as he does himself. It specially refers to the weal and woe of others. This is not the same thing as saying that a wicked impulse should be neutralized by a virtuous one.

The distinction between the *Seer* who is blessed and happy as a *Jeevan-Mukta* and one who, though a *Seer*, is still unblessed and unhappy, is far from intelligible from the stand-point of true *Adwaita*.

On the whole, it is clear that *Madhusoodana* has wandered very far from the verse. A fairly plain ethical verse has been construed on abstruse lines of intellectual and philosophical metaphysics based largely on *Patanjali's* subtleties. The result is that the sweet beauty of the golden rule inculcated is lost. Neither *Sankaracharya* nor *Sreedharan*, *Neelakanta* and others have attempted this line of thought.

अर्जुन उवाच —

33) योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।
 एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चंचलत्वात्स्थितिं
 स्थिराम् ॥

34) चंचलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।
 तस्याऽहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥

अर्जुन उवाच ... Arjuna said

यः ... which

अयं ... this

योगः	... Yoga
त्वया	... by you
प्रोक्तः	... has been taught
साम्येन	... based on 'Equality'
मधुसूदन	... O! Madhusoodana
एतस्य	... of this
अहं, न, पश्यामि	... I do not see
चञ्चलत्वात्	... as the mind is unstable
स्थितिं	... existence
स्थिरां	... firm
चञ्चलं	... flickering, unstable
हि verily
मनः	... is the mind
कृष्ण	... O! Krishna
प्रमाथि	... impetuous
बलवत्	... strong
दृढं	... hard to break
तस्य	... of it
अहं	... I
निग्रहं	... subjugation
मन्ये	... deem
वायोः	... of the wind
इव	... As
सुदुष्करं	... unachievable

Arjuna said :

“This Yoga which has been taught by you as consisting of “Equality,” O ! Madhusoodana, of it, I do see how its firm existence is possible, because the mind is unstable.”

“O ! Krishna, the Mind is unstable, verily ; it is impetuous, strong, and hard to break down. I think is subjugation is as impossible as that of the wind.”

Arjuna complains that the Yoga of Meditation taught by the Lord is well-nigh impossible of achievement because its foundation is the ever fitful Mind. The essence of Yoga is ‘mental balance’. The Mind being such an unstable, changeful base, to build Yoga on it is naturally a hard task.

In connection with Yoga, समत्वं is the word that is often used for defining or describing it. It may be seen that *Karmayoga* was defined in verse 48, chapter II, which said ‘To be *balanced evenly in success and failure* is called Yoga’.

In chapter V, verse No.18 said, “Sages look *equally* on a Brahmin of learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and an outcaste”. Chapter V, 19, – ‘Even here on Earth, Samsara is overcome by those whose Mind remains balanced. For, Brahman is सम and faultless, and they are firm in Brahman. In chapter VI, verse No. 8 spoke of the Yogin looking *equally* on gold and a lump of Earth. Verse 9 says that the Yogin regards *equally* well-wishers, friends, enemies,

strangers, neutrals, aliens and relatives, as also the righteous and the unrighteous. Verse 19 spoke of Mind of the Yogin being steady like the lamp in a windless space. Verse 29 spoke of the Yogin seeing the Atman in everything and everything in the Atman, so that he perceives God absolutely *equal*. Lastly, verse 32 spoke of the Yogin treating his brethren as himself making their weal and woe his own.

In these various reference to Yoga and '*equality*', it may be that a *balanced mind* is at the bottom. For the Yoga of meditation which is the principal topic of the present chapter, the steady mind is the most vital requisite. For seeing the existense of an *equally powerful and Infinite God* in the biggest and smallest object of the world, the subtlety of the Yogic mind keen and steady is required. Similarly, to realize the golden rule of fellowship extended to all brethren requires a mind that is not swayed by passion and prejudice.

Thus, although the Yoga hitherto taught falls under more man one class, समत्त्व or equanimity is the underlying idea throughout. Hence, Arjuna says, "You have taught Yoga by harping on साम्य. His objection is that, if Yoga is so absolutely based on mental balance, the achievement has to be given up as a hopeless task. For, by intrinsic nature, the Mind is changeful. Steady, it can never be. It is so impetuous as to carry any opposition by storm (प्रमाथि). It is endowed with great strength and is so compact as to be unyielding. It is as hard to curb as the wind.

Madhusoodana thinks that the *Yoga* described here as very hard is the condition of the *Jeevan-Mukta* referred to just before in verse No.32. The reader may refresh his memory by turning to this annotator's notes of the said verse.

Drawing a distinction between a *higher* and a *lower* (परम and अपरम), Madhusoodana opined that a *mere* Yogin *Adwaitic knowledge* was an *inferior* seer, while the *superior* one combined with *Adwaitic knowledge* two other ingredients, *viz.*, (1) the conquest of the Mind and (2) the extinction of hoarded experiences (वासनाs.) If these three elements become combined in harmony, the Seer is said to be a blissful *Jeevan-Mukta*.

According to Madhusoodana. Arjuna's objection stands thus: – "By realizing *Adwaita*, I may become a Seer. But I fail to see how the Mind can be annihilated and वासनाs extinguished. This is to be done by yogic and kindred methods. But surely, *Prarabdha karma* is invincible. It resists तत्त्वज्ञान before it is born. It nullifies तत्त्वज्ञान after it is born. So likewise, does it obstruct mental equanimity and prevent वासनाs from dying. Hence the attainment of the 'Higher Yoga' taught by you in the last verse is impossible."

I see no sufficient reason to confine the "Yoga" and "साम्य" of the text to the contents of the last foregoing verse alone. As already shown, 'mental balance' is a conspicuous part even of *karmayoga*.

Of ध्यानयोग it forms its most important ingredient.

The dissertation relating to the 'higher' and 'Lower' Yogin rests on slender grounds. The reader is referred to the last verse where this point is discussed.

I fail to see how तत्त्वज्ञान is possible without समत्व or balance of mind. One who allows his mind to wander among temptations cannot *realize* Adwaita. To say that a Seer may be a तत्त्वज्ञानी and may still not be a जीवन्मुक्त seems to imply a contradiction in terms.

If Arjuna's objection be that Prarabdha is invincible and hence there is no possibility of Yogic meditation being achieved, it may be expected that the Lord meets this objection by showing how *prarabdha can be overcome*. But there is not a syllable out Prarabdha in the text, nor in the verses of the Lord's reply. The complaint is, in the plain sense of the words, that the Mind is a great vagabond. The reply is that vagrant as the Mind may be, it is still amenable to discipline and repeated effort. I therefore venture to think that Madhusoodana has not only imported all sorts of notions into the last verse, but also wrongly narrowed the present verse (No.33) by making it apply to the last one alone (No.32).

No other commentator has, as far as I have seen, followed Madhusoodana (N.B. not even Venkatanath). All the others understood योग and साम्य in a comprehensive way more or less.

Ramanujacharya thinks that Arjuna's difficulty consisted in understanding *the equality in essence* of all Jeevas and their quality with God. We see men and animals marked by infinite grades of inequality. We are overridden by Karma and God is not. How is it possible to conceive that all Beings are equal to one another and to God ?

If this be the point of Arjuna's objection, it is indeed a formidable objection. I don't see that the Lord has met it in His reply of two verses 35 and 36, because the Lord says simply, 'by Practice and Dispassion the mind is liable to be controlled.'

The equality of all Jeevas among themselves and with God is an unsound doctrine and the text lends no support thereto.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

35) असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥

36) असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।

वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥

श्रीभगवान् उवाच ... The Lord said

असंशयं	...	undoubtedly
महाबाहो	...	O ! Mighty-armed
मनः	...	the Mind
दुर्निग्रहं	...	uncontrollable
चलं	...	unstable
अभ्यासेन	...	by practice
तु	...	but
कौन्तेय	...	O ! son of Kunttee
वैराग्येण	...	by renunciation
च	...	and
गृह्यते	...	is restrained
असंयतात्मना	...	By one whose mind is not checked
योगः	...	Yoga
दुष्प्रापः	...	is unattainable
इति	...	thus
मे	...	My
मतिः	...	opinion
वश्यात्मना	...	by one of restrained Mind
तु	...	but
यतता	...	by the striver
शक्यः	...	is possible
अवाप्तुं	...	to attain
उपायतः	...	by skill

had to be obtained has been obtained. All afflictions have been killed. The fast-jointed chain of life has been broken." Desirelessness is but the highest perfection of spiritual knowledge ; and *Kaivalya* is nothing else."

I have quoted the Yoga Aphorisms at some length to show how far the Geeta lesson receives corroboration from that Shastra. But the Vedantin does not approve of the dicta and dogmas of that Shastra in entirety. For example, no Vedantin can accept the doctrine that to be 'desireless' is by itself '*Kaivalya*.'

Broadly speaking, Sri Krishna says, as the Yoga aphorisms lay down too, that Yoga (by which restraint of Mind is adverted to) is reached through constant effort aided by a relinquishment of pleasures.

Verse 35, second line says, "By Practice and Renunciation is the Mind curbed." The word 'also' denotes that these are not exhaustive. In scriptural literature, we find other means also mentioned. Madhusoodana quotes Vasishta Ramayana largely in this connection.

There, 'Study, good company, avoidance of evil and control of breaths' are recommended. It is pointed out that mental conquest is never to be attempted in an impetuous manner by severe measures like those of an army taking a fort by storm. Such a course is altogether unsuited for the purpose. The striver should, on the other hand, proceed slowly and slowly by degrees, developing his practice day by day and gaining his ground inch by inch so as to make sure

of his progress. This is known as क्रमनिग्रह as distinguished from हठनिग्रह.

Sri Madhwa quotes *Brahma Purana* where it is recommended that *Practice* and *Renunciation* should be supplemented by *holy thoughts*, *Devotion to God* and *Faith*. Thus the Geeta verse under notice is not to be taken as an exhaustive enumeration of all that the seeker is expected to do.

It may be seen that Sri Krishna addresses Arjuna with the words महाबाहो and कौन्तेय. In Utkarsha Deepika a certain amount of significance is imputed to these words. As to the first of the said words, it is pointed out that the object is to draw Arjuna's attention to the fact that mere might of arms suffices for curbing the mind. Arjuna, no doubt, was mighty in prowess and physical strength. He had fought Siva himself. But he should not, on this ground, delude himself into the belief that that Mind could be subdued as easily. As to the word कौन्तेय it is suggested that the piety and devotion of his mother Kunttee in serving that most irascible of guests, namely, Doorvasa, in her maidenhood, is not inappropriately the subject of allusion.

Verse 36 repeats the substance of verse 35 in an emphatic way and in a slightly different aspect. It is meant to silence the possible objection that, apart from Practice and Desirelessness, the Mind *could be subdued* by allowing it license to have its full swing of enjoyment. The objector means that the Mind is

bound to suffer exhaustion and become quiescent. The Lord replies that such a hope is far from entertainable. There is chance only if the person abandons Desire and practises self-discipline with care and skill and not otherwise.

Madhusoodana's view about the point of Arjuna's query has been already stated. According to him, Arjuna's lament relates to the Seer who has realized Oneness according to Adwaitic conception and finds his way to Jeevanmukti still blocked by Prarabdha. Arjuna bewails the invincible power of Prarabdha which will not allow the seer to grasp the legitimate of fruits Adwaitic Realization and obtain the ineffable bliss of Jeevan-Mukti.

Sri Krishna solves this difficulty for Arjuna by the verses under comment. The purport of the reply, as Madhusoodana puts it, is that, although Prarabdha is undoubtedly strong and powerful, it yields to the pressure of human endeavour. We see men engaged in worldly and religious pursuits and obtaining success as the reward of effort and application put forth. If Destiny which is another name for Prarabdha be simply invincible, human endeavour will have no purpose to serve. उपायतः in verse 36 means 'manliness'. By manly effort, Prarabdha is conquerable. Hence the Lord advises the seer to get to the bliss of Jeevanmukti by means of endeavour sustained by manliness.

It seems to me that all this emphasis laid on *Prarabdha and destiny* is by no means traceable to the text. There is no warrant for the supposition that

Arjuna's question relates only to that peculiar state known as *Jeevanmukti*. There is nothing here to show that Arjuna is not rather thinking here of all good men, seers or no seers, who find it a hard task to curb the mind and enter upon Yoga. When the language is general where is the justification for narrowing its application ? To discuss the moot question whether Destiny is more powerful than Free-will or the converse, will be a needless digression. Madhusoodana seems to think that Free-will can simply sweep away Prarabdha. Much may be said on both sides. But this controversy is not very relevant here.

Ramanujacharya thinks that *Karmayoga* is the means referred to here as the best instrument for curbing the mind. He thinks that as *Karmayoga* implies knowledge (gnana), no better means could be thought of for controlling the mind. As for *Abhyasa* (practice) and *Vairagya* (Desirelessness) spoken of in the text, Desikar says that these are meant only as subsidiary to *Karmayoga* and are not intended to be the main instruments of self-control.

The reader may see that it is not *Karmayoga* that we have dealing with in this chapter, but *Dhyanyoga* (the Yoga of Meditation). For the purpose of ध्यानयोग Arjuna urged that the mind was hard to curb. Brushing aside *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* expressly adverted to in the text, Ramanujacharya introduces *Karmayoga* here and puts forward an interpretation that is forced and far-fetched to say the least.

अर्जुन उवाच —

37) अयतिश्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।

अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥

38) कश्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।

अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥

39) एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।

त्वदन्यस्संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥

अर्जुन ... Arjuna

उवाच ... said

अयतिः ... of insufficient endeavour

श्रद्धया ... with faith

उपेतः ... endowed

योगात् ... from the Yoga of Meditation

चलितमानसः ... of Mind shaken off

अप्राप्य ... not attaining

योगसंसिद्धिं ... the fruition of Yoga

कां ... what

गतिं ... end

कृष्ण	... O ! Krishna
गच्छति	... does he reach
कच्चित्	... is it ?
न	... not
उभयविभ्रष्टः	... fallen from both
छिन्नाभ्रं	... a severed cloud
इव	... like
नश्यति	... is lost
अप्रतिष्ठः	... without support
महाबाहो	... O ! Mighty-armed
विमूढः	... bewildered
ब्रह्मणः	... of Brahman .
पथि	... in the Path of
एतत्	... this
मे	... my
संशयं	... doubt
कृष्ण	... O ! Krishna
छेत्तुम्	... to solve
अर्हसि	... deign
अशेषतः	... fully
त्वदन्यः	... except you
संशयस्य	... of doubt
अस्य	... this
छेत्ता	... dispeller

न	... not
हि	... indeed
उपपद्यते	... is competent

37. "O ! Krishna, what end does the man reach who fails to attain the fruition of *Yoga*, being shaken off from it owing to insufficient endeavour, though full of Faith.

38. Whether he is not lost, fallen from both, like a severed cloud without support and bewildered in the Path of Brahman, O ! Mighty-armed.

39. This doubt of mine, O ! Krishna, deign to solve completely. Except you, none is competent to dispel this doubt."

In verse 40, chapter II, Arjuna was told that, in Karma Yoga, there was no loss of effort nor sin incurred by an imperfect performance. He was taught that even a little of it would bring on salvation. Now Arjuna wishes to know if the same efficacy applies to the *Yoga of Meditation* (ध्यानयोग) also. He asks, therefore, whether a person who begins this Yoga very well, full of faith and sincerity, but breaks off in the middle owing to lack of perseverance and the difficulties in the way, is not lost altogether.

He is undoubtedly like a piece of cloud which is wrenched off by the wind from the main cloud and which soon vanishes from sight. Not having pursued *Karma*, he gets nothing of worldly value

and no bliss in Swarga. He took to Meditation but this has borne no fruit. Possessed of no support either way, it is possible that he is lost. Is it so ? asks Arjuna.

In respect to the doubt propounded by Arjuna, it is necessary to understand clearly whom he means by the person that has gone on well for a time and then suffers a lapse. Some commentators think that one who was steadily practising *Karmayoga*, doing work without desire of fruit and dedicating it to God, is person contemplated. His lapse is explained to mean addiction to *Kamya* work. This view is not sound. The person of whom Arjuna propounds the doubt is one who apparently has no claim to any benefit either from his past course or from his future one. As to the Karmayogin, however, unselfish work duly done by him and dedicated to God results in *mental purity*. Its efficacy is undoubted. It is said,

जन्मान्तरसहस्रेषु यज्ञदानतपोध्वरैः ।
 नराणां क्षीणपापानां कृष्णभक्तिः प्रजायते ॥
 स्ववर्णाश्रमधर्मेण तपसा हरितोषणात् ।
 साधनं प्रभवेत्पुंसां वैराग्यादिचतुष्टयम् ॥
 नित्यनैमित्तिकैरेव नियमेनेश्वरार्पितैः ।
 बहुजन्मकृतैर्विप्रस्सत्त्वशुद्धिं समश्नुते ॥

“By yagna, gifts, penance, and sacrifices, performed in thousands of previous births, men get cleansed of sin, and then is born Bhakti towards Sri Krishna. By the performance of Dharma relating to one’s own caste and order, by penances and by the propitiation of Sri Hari, is the preparation of men completed consisting of the four elements, Vairagya and the rest. By the daily and occasional duties regularly done and dedicated to God in many a birth, the Brahmin secures *Purity of Mind*’. Hence the labours of the *Karmayogin* are never barren of good results. Moreover, verse 40 of chapter II emphatically taught Arjuna that an imperfect performance of Karmayoga never mattered at all.

As to the state he lapses to, can it be a course of *Kāmya*? It is difficult to support this view either. *Kāmya* necessarily bears fruit in this world or Swarga. Why should it be said of him that he has ‘fallen from both’ (उभयविभ्रष्टः) ?

Thus Arjuna’s statement, “fallen from both and without sport” is inapplicable and inappropriate in respect to the *karmayogin* as well as to the *Kāmya* doer.

It is Neelakanta that construes the *Yoga* from which the man is shaken off to be *karmayoga*. Ramanujacharya’s rendering too is similar. According to him, Arjuna wishes to know more of Karmayoga and its efficacy on the lines already taught in chapter II, verse 40, and in continuation thereof. Vivritiacharya construes *Yoga* here to denote ध्यानयोग.

It is needless to repeat the reasons at any length for the latter view. The chapter under comment has been so far dealing with *Meditation*. The efficacy of *Karmayoga* even as to partially performed work was already taught with clearness, and Arjuna had no good grounds for any doubt in that behalf. That *Karmayoga* results in mental purity is also an old lesson.

The school of Sankaracharya think that the person contemplated here is a kind of *Sanyasin*. Their view may be briefly stated thus :— “There are three classes of Sanyasins : (i) Those who become Sanyasins after they have realized Brahmic Unity (विद्वत्संन्यास). (ii) Those who take to the Fourth Order (संन्यास) for the purpose of acquiring Gnana (विविदिषासंन्यास). (iii) Those who assume the Asrama as आपत्संन्यास, i.e., shortly before death.

As to these, the first group is not contemplated here because such a seer is beyond the possibility of lapses. Nor can the third group be the subject of doubt, because, to the Sanyasin of that class, *Brahma Loka* is reserved as the reward. Hence, the second group is the object of Arjuna's doubt. The person who is full of faith and assumes Sanyasa for studying the Shastras begins very well. If he fails to obtain gnana, his position resembles that of the cloud. Having assumed Sanyasa, he has forsaken *all* Karma. Unless he attains to gnana, the relinquishment of all scriptural Karma is bound

to be wrong. But *exhypothesi* he has failed to reach gnana. Thus he has lost an old footing and failed to secure the new one."

This reasoning is far from convincing. There is nothing the text to be clearly suggestive of the idea that a technical ascetic (संन्यासिन्) is here contemplated, and there too, a particular section. What is there to show that a person of any Caste or Order, who has pursued for a time and given up ध्यानयोग cannot be the man contemplated. The deviation of Sanyasins into three classes is queer. The आपत्संन्यासिन् is an individual that seems hardly to deserve any respect. He casts off the tuft and the sacred *thread* when life is ebbing away, not because he has relinquished Desire, but because he wants to arm himself against Yama the God of Death, and reach the abode of the Four-faced Brahman.

It is very doubtful if this *Sanyasin* whose Vairagya is but skin-deep, deserves the appellation, or merits Brahma Loka. In explaining the two-sided disaster of the middle class of Sanyasins it was said that their relinquishment of all scriptural Dharma and Karma was the disaster on one side and the non-attainment of gnana was the disaster on the other. But the Sanyasin does not, in fact, violate any scriptural Dharma or Karma at all.

Sanyasa is as much one of the scriptural enjoined Dharmas, as Brahmacharya or Garhastya. Sanyasa for the sake of study and gnana is regu-

lated by rules as well as any other Order. It has its duties and procedure duly regulated. If he relinquishes Agnihotra, he does so, *by the law*, and incurse no sin. The view that every Sanyasin relinquishes Dharma and incurs penalty unless (as a *condition subsequent* in the words of the lawyer) he succeeds in reaching Adwaitic Gnana is untenable.

In this connection, it is refreshing to read Sreedhara's annotation. Unlike all his brethren, he construes the verse literally and broadly, without narrowing its application to ascetics.

श्रीभगवानुवाच —

40) पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥

श्रीभगवान्	... The Blessed Lord
उवाच	... said
पार्थ	... O Arjuna
न एव	... not at all
इह	... here below
न अमुत्र	... nor in the other world
विनाशः	... ruin
तस्य	... to him
विद्यते	... occurs

न हि	... not indeed
कल्याणकृत्	... the doer of any good
कश्चित्	... any one
दुर्गतिं	... an evil end
तात	... O ! Sire
गच्छति	... does he reach

“The Blessed Lord said : – Neither here below, nor in after-life, O ! Arjuna, does ruin overtake him. Verily, no doer of good, whoever he be, reaches an evil end.”

As to Karmayoga, it was said in chapter II, verse 40, that its great merit lay in the circumstance that even an imperfect and interrupted performance earned a reward and that no forfeiture or penalties were incurred by partially done acts of Karmayoga. When the present chapter dealing with the Yoga of Meditation (ध्यानयोग), is about to close, Arjuna wishes to know if the merit mentioned before in respect to *Karma Yoga* applied to ध्यानयोग also.

His doubt is whether the same rule or principle applied to both the *Yogas* or not. The Lord replies in the affirmative. The reply is worded with emphasis. The Lord is eager that Arjuna should not dream of any other rule being possible. He gives expression to His feeling by two expressions पार्थ and तात in the vocative. Such expressions occur when-

ever a point is being pressed home. They indicate the speaker's emotion and give point to the emphasis intended. तत्र in this verse should be specially noticed.

Literally, it means 'O ! Sire' and denotes 'the father'. In Sanskrit and in the Indian Vernaculars, it is often used in addressing the son or a child or a pupil. It is then a term of endearment and is used in addressing anybody if the context intends affection, intimacy, or endearment. Sri Krishna uses it here towards Arjuna. It corresponds to the English expression ' My dear fellow or sir' used in conversation where the speaker means to throw in some vehemence and emotion in accentuating his point.

In Utkarsha Deepika, the word पार्थ is explained in a queer way. It means literally "O son of Kunttee." From this it argued that Sri Krishna meant to convey a veiled censure than Arjuna was a person of weak mind and was deficient in intelled like women. Kunttee being a woman was no exception the general rule of women being weak in intellect.

Arjuna is here addressed as being the son of his mother with view to point attention to the fact that he took after his mother in brains. This explanation is as fanciful as it is untenable. If Kunttee were more than ordinarily weak and stupid, perhaps, there might be a hidden meaning such as has been suggested. But surely, Kunttee was not weaker in mind than the general run of woman-

kind. By the mere fact that Arjuna was the son of woman, if any hereditary weakness is to be imputed to him, why then, no person in the world can claim to be clever, for, this kind of heredity is the besetting sin of every man.

Moreover, there is no reason for the assumption at all that Arjuna leaned towards his maternal parent rather than to the paternal. He was brave and manly in the fullest sense. He was manifested all the virtues of manliness to a greater extent than Yudhishtira, Nakula, and Sahadeva in his own family, and more than most other mothers' sons in the world. Utkarsha Deepika thinks that as Arjuna had been already told in ch. II, verse 40, about the great merit of Yoga, he should not have put the question at all. But verse 40 of chapter II dealt with a different subject.

It was necessary to elicit clearly if the merit spoken of in respect to *Karma Yoga* applied to *Dhyana Yoga* also. Even if Arjuna could have guessed as much, being a pupil of a high order as he was in fact, the question is still intelligible. The Geeta dispels, not only Arjuna's doubts, but those of men in general among whom are various grades of intelligence. To clear such a doubt, Arjuna puts the question and elicits an emphatic pronouncement.

The Lord says that the man who took to Yoga at first with sincerity and zeal and broke off after a time, is not lost at all. If he dies, he is born in

a high and pious family amidst facilities and environments that help his spiritual progress. He is not born as a brute or vermin. In after-life he reaches abodes of bliss as the due meed of ध्यानयोग partially gone through.

In the second line, the Lord makes a generalized pronouncement that no man is ever visited with demerit, sin or suffering, for any good imperfectly performed. Be it Karma Yoga or Dhyana Yoga or anything else, a good thought, word or deed, is ever bound to be productive of good and not of evil.

The Smritis say of ध्यानयोग that a thousand Aswamedha sacrifices and a hundred Vajapeya sacrifices do not carry $1/16^{\text{th}}$ of the merit attached to a single engagement in ध्यानयोग. Another Smriti says "one who meditates on Brahman, be it only for a minute with steadiness of mind, may himself as the pious person who has bathed in all the sacred waters of the world, who has gifted the whole earth, who has performed a thousand yagnas, who has worshipped and propitiated all the Gods, who has redeemed all his ancestors from bondage and who is honoured in the three worlds."

It is by no means an easy matter to fix the mind on God even for a minute with the constriction that true Yoga implies. Thousands of Brahmins young and old utter mantras and make the gestures of breath-control and mental concentration, every day of their lives. But the concentration is, in most

cases, no deeper than the tip of the nose. The steady habit of Divine Meditation duly practised is, on the other hand, a veritable acquisition of marvelous power here below and ineffable bliss in after-life.

By the words इह (here below) and अमुत्र (in after-life) the Lord contemplates temporal and heavenly rewards. Salvation which is another name for *Vaikunta* is however not contemplated, because the man spoken of is not a sage or seer. He is one who began well but discontinued before reaching the end. To such a person, *Vaikunta* is out of the question, for he has qualified himself for it.

Ramanujacharya thinks that by the word इह all the possible rewards of this world and the other worlds such as *Swarga* are intended, and that by अमुत्र *Moksha* is contemplated. This does not appear to be sound for the reason just mentioned.

By इह Vivritiacharya understands the allusion to be to possible disasters in the shape of descent into lower forms of life. It is, of course, a calamity to be degraded into births such as those of a vermin or a brute.

Sankaracharya's followers think that by इह the allusion is to the possibility of bad name, disgrace, dishonour or censure, incurred in society. The Yogin whose *Yoga* is broken off is liable to incur odium. The Lord says that he does not.

Under the last foregoing verses, the person contemplated by Arjuna's query was explained by the commentators of the Sankara School as a particular kind of Sanyasin. He was said to be a विविदिषासंन्यासिन् meaning an ascetic who has assumed the Fourth Order for the sake of Advaitic knowledge, and who has provided himself with every equipment according to Shastras but dies before he has realized Oneness with Brahman. I have endeavoured to show already in this connection that there is nothing like a sure indication in the language of the text to effect that any technical *ascetic* is contemplated here.

41) प्राप्य पुण्यकृतान्लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।

शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥

42) अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।

एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥

प्राप्य	... obtaining
पुण्यकृतान्	... deserved by merits
लोकान्	... worlds
उषित्वा	... living
शाश्वतीः	... long-continued
समाः	... years
शुचीनां	... 'pious

श्रीमतां	... of fortune
गेहे	... in a house
योगभ्रष्टः	... the person fallen off from Yoga
अभिजायते	... is born
अथवा	... or
योगिनां	... of yogins
एव	... only
कुले	... in the family
भवति	... is born
धीमतां	... of sages
एतत्	... this
हि	... verily
दुर्लभतरं	... is very hard to get
लोके	... in the world
जन्म	... birth
यत्	... which
ईदृशं	... is of this kind

41. "After obtaining higher worlds deserved merits, and living there for long-continued years, the person who has fallen off from Yoga is born in some house of pious men possessed of fortune".

42. "Or he is born in the family itself of Yogin who are sages. This is indeed a rare gain in this world to be born in this manner".

In the first line of verse 41 here पुण्यकृतां is the reading in the editions of the Sankara school. Such is the reading of Ramanujacharya also. But the meaning is substantially the same. The man who has fallen off from Yoga reaches world that he has deserved by merits and lives there for a long time which is well-nigh unlimited. But it does come to an end, though at a very distant future, and he reverts to Samsara. He takes birth in some family possessed of piety as well as riches.

The Lord calls the period spent in the upper worlds well-nigh unlimited, because compared with human calculations the said period is indeed very very long.

Madhusoodana thinks that the region that this imperfect goes to is Brahma Loka. In the text लोकान् is the plural employed. Madhusoodana thinks that various parts of Loka are contemplated. The reason for thinking of Brahma Loka as the only region contemplated by the text is the notion that the Yogin in question was a Sanyasin who died before *Adwaitic Oneness*. But it is difficult to see why he should necessarily have been an *ascetic* in the technical sense. Nor is it necessary to confine the term 'Upper worlds' to mean Brahma Loka and none other.

Abhinava Guptacharya construes शाश्वतीः समाः to mean "the *three* years of Vishnu who is known as शाश्वत" I do not understand what this really means.

It is the prevailing view among the members of Sankaracharya's school that none but a Sanyasin is qualified for *knowledge*, or ever succeeds in obtaining it. They harp largely on this notion and therefore make out the योगब्रह्म in question to be one who died as a Sanyasin. In this connection, it is important to mark the language of verse 42, first line. It is said there that the family of some Yogin who is a धीमान् gives birth to the योगब्रह्म. It is thus clear that the parent in question is a Yogin. It is admitted on all hands that this individual is an adept in the Yoga of Meditation and is an accomplished sage. God gives to the योगब्रह्म birth in such a family for enabling him to pick up easily the lost thread of Yoga and reach the goal. It is clear therefore that a householder may be both a Yogin and a Sage.

Sankarananda discusses this point in a long note at the end of which he reluctantly states the conclusion that householders like Vasishta, Agastya, Janaka and Aswapati, are conceivable who may become sages without the *ascetic order of life*. This gives away the case of the योगब्रह्म being *necessarily* a Sanyasin whom death prevented from reaching the goal in that life itself. No doubt, the योगब्रह्म spoken of could not have been a काम्य doer : because this class of observances requires a duly sustained performance with scrupulous attention to every detail.

The man who does it well gets the allotted reward. The man who does it ill gets none at all. Nor is it possible that the fall contemplated was from कर्मयोग; because verse 40, chapter II, distinctly taught the lesson already that partial performance of *Karmayoga* entails no penalties at all. Thus the *sordid doer* and the *Karmayogin* are excluded, so that the योगभ्रष्ट in question is concluded to be one who went through the Yoga of Meditation for a time and broke off. The reasoning so far is clear, but the further point that he should have been a Sanyasin also is not so clear.

The reader will compare the language of the two verses under notice. Verse No.41 speaks of '*birth in a family piety and fortune*'. Verse 42 speaks of '*birth in the family a Yogin and a Seer*'. It follows that the former is associated with wealth and the latter with poverty. The former affords facilities for acquiring knowledge by enabling the rich and pious individual to find out a proper teacher. The latter supplies the teacher directly in the person of the father himself. This contrast is briefly suggested by Sankaracharya. Riches are, no doubt, not as helpful to spiritual progress as poverty, for, the Biblical saying is that it is far easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for the rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

There is no objection to the view that verse 41 deals with the future of one who broke off from Yoga at a very *early* stage and long before he took

root in it, and that verse 42 treats of one who had made substantial progress in Yoga and Vairagya before circumstances brought about an interruption. Hence, the former is to be born wealthy and pious, and the latter is to take birth as the son of a sage.

Sankarananda is of opinion that verse 42 speaks of 'birth in the sage's house' as an event immediately and directly following upon the death of the योगब्रह्म. He thinks that, unlike the person dealt with in verse 41 who spends prolonged periods in the upper worlds, the person referred to in verse 42 gets into a new family, the moment he has kicked off the old body. This interpretation deduced by the said writer from the word अथवा which is said to mean अथैव = *immediately after*.

This interpretation is far-fetched. It seems to me that the reference to long periods of enjoyment in upper worlds is common to both the sets of men. On reverting to Samsara, however, one goes into a rich family and the other into a family of learning and wisdom. The second line alone of verse 41 and the first line of verse 42 furnish the alternatives, while the first line of verse 41 speaks of the future common to both.

In verse 42, the second line says 'Such a birth is rare to obtain'. The doubt here is whether this refers only to the second alternative, *viz.*, birth in the family of the seer or whether it includes the

first alternative also, *viz.*, birth in a family of piety and fortune. In one view, both the alternatives are rare as each is valuable in its own way. It is not easy to get born in a house not only of affluence but also of piety and sanctity.

The author of Vivriti, Ramanujacharya and Venkatanatha, are of opinion that both are praised as rare relatively to ordinary people, while Nilakanta, Sreedhara, and Sankarananda, take the view that the second man alone is eulogized and declared superior to the other who takes birth in a pious and wealthy family. This divergence has to be noticed further under the next verse.

43) तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।

यतते च ततो भूयस्संसिद्धौ कुरुनंदन ॥

44) पूर्वाभ्यसेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोपि सः ।

जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥

तत्र ... therein

तं ... that

बुद्धिसंयोगं ... the Yoga of Meditation

लभते ... he obtains

पौर्वदेहिकं ... relating to the previous birth.

यतते च ... and endeavours

ततः	... then
भूयः	... very much
संसिद्धौ	... for success
कुरुनन्दन	... O ! Son of Kuru
पूर्वाभ्यासेन	... by the past practice
तेन एव	... by that alone
हियते	... is drawn away
हि	... indeed
अवशः	... involuntarily
अपि	... even
सः	... he
जिज्ञासुः	... the enquirer
अपि	... even
योगस्य	... of Yoga
शब्दब्रह्म	... the law of 'do and refrain'
अतिवर्तते	... transcends

"Therein he regains the Yoga of Meditation of the past Birth, and endeavours hard for success, O! son of Kuru."

"Only by that his former practice, he is drawn away even involuntarily. Even the inquirer of *Yoga* transcends the law of 'do and refrain' *i.e.*, attains salvation."

We are now told how the man benefits by his birth in a pious nobleman's family or in the family

of a Yogin and seer. He is enabled by his new environments to pick up the lost thread. He is drawn to 'Meditation' involuntarily. The hoard of past experience exerts on him a pressure which he is unable to resist. Unconsciously, he turns to ध्यानयोग and strives harder and harder for success.

There is some controversy here as to whether the statement in the text applies to both the individuals mentioned in verses 41 and 42 or to the latter alone. It may be remembered that Arjuna's question about the desiny of a fallen Yogin was answered by the reply that such a man is born either in a pious and rich house or in that of a Yogin and seer. The doubt now is whether the easy resumption and progress of Yoga referred to in the text applies to both the individuals aforesaid. In other words, the doubt is whether even the birth in a rich and pious family is attended with blessings the same as, or similar to, those of a birth in the family of the Yogin and seer.

The author of Vivriti is of opinion that both are blessed more or less similarly. Madhusoodana, Sreedhara, and Venkatanatha take the same view. Sankaracharya thinks that the text relates only to the individual mentioned in verse 42, *i.e.*, to one who is born in the family of an indigent Yogin and Seer. Utkarsha Deepika, of course, supports his Guru.

It seems to me that there is no sufficient reason to exclude the individual mentioned in verse 41

from the purview of the text. It may be that a योगभ्रष्ट is born in a rich and holy family or in a poor and learned family. The birth therein is not an end by itself. He is so born for the sake of spiritual progress, which means the resumption of the Yoga from which he fell off in the past birth.

To confine the text to the second of the afore-said individuals means denying to the first the reward he is fairly entitled to by reason of the Yoga he practised though imperfectly. To be born with a silver spoon in the mouth is not a reward by itself. Even if it be so, it is but a poor reward not worth mentioning for a Yogin.

It may be that योगभ्रष्टs are of various grades and that one who practised Yoga for a long time and broke off on the eve of the goal is not to be placed on a level with one who fell off after a brief practice. This disparity will make it reasonable that the former should sooner resume his Yoga and more easily attain to success. But there is no ground however why the latter too should not derive from his birth in a pious rich family facilities for his onward march, though, in his case, the facilities might be less and the march slower.

Sri Krishna begins his reply by asserting कल्याण in respect to every kind of योगभ्रष्ट. Wealth by itself is no कल्याण. Its enjoyment is more often than not a source of peril and disaster. Verse 41 does not

speak of wealth alone. It adds the significant word शुचीनां. Its significance lies in the fact that the piety of the family materially helps the new-born member to resume his Yoga.

It may be noted that the second line of verse 44 under notice employs the reasoning that, because even a mere *Enquirer of Yoga* (जिज्ञासु) is on the road to salvation, it follows much more therefore that the योगब्रह्म should be assuredly blessed. Surely, the योगब्रह्म of both classes (referred to respectively in verses 41 and 42) is superior to the mere *Enquirer* mentioned in verse 44. The point of the argument based on the *a fortiori* reasoning just noticed loses much of its value and force if one class of योगब्रह्म is altogether left out of account.

At the end of my notes on verses 41 and 42, I have noticed that what is declared rare दुर्लभ is both *kinds of birth* and not alone birth in the family of the Yogin-seer. The comparative degree in दुर्लभतर is intended to mark the superiority of both the kinds of birth to other *births* conceivable as the reward of other kinds of merit. The comparative degree is not intended to institute a comparison between one kind of birth and another that the योगब्रह्म obtains and mark off their relative value.

Vasishta Ramayana is held in esteem and is largely quoted from, by the leaders of the Advaita

school. A long passage quoted by Madhusoodana here deals with men who meet with death in unfinished stages of spiritual progress. It speaks of heavenly regions enjoyed by them and of their birth in the family of pious and wealthy men. (The words there are शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे).

Then it is said, the men so born resume their Yoga by reason of their instincts in that direction and march onward. (The passage is quoted in my Sanskrit-exposition). From this it may be clear at least to the members of the Advaita school who regard Vasishtha Ramayana as a work of great authority, that the योगभ्रष्ट born in piety and wealth is not to be contented with wealth alone but continues on a fair road to salvation. For these reasons, Madhusoodana interprets तत्र in the text (verse 43) to refer to both the kinds of birth (mentioned in verses 41 and 42) and ventures to differ from Sankaracharya himself.

The second line of verse 44 calls for a brief notice. Sri Krishna says that even a 'mere enquirer of Yoga' transcends शब्दब्रह्म. There is some divergence of opinion as to who is meant by the expression 'the mere enquirer of Yoga' and what is denoted by शब्दब्रह्म.

ध्यानयोग is the main theme of the chapter. What happens to one who practices it for a time and falls off from it is the subject of the discussion on hand.

It is emphatically asserted as to his future that nothing but good marks his course. To lend force to this assertion, the Lord points out that even an *Enquirer* is on the right path and, *a fortiori*, is the योगब्रह्म in question. The very nature of the *a fortiori* argument shows that the '*Enquirer*' contemplated is one who is eager to know all about ध्यानयोग.

Sankarananda, however, takes योगस्य जिज्ञासुः of the text to mean 'the Enquirer about Brahman'. He renders the word योग to mean *Brahman*. Apart from etymology, the context seems to require that योग should mean ध्यानयोग here. I have pointed out the reason above.

But it does not appear wholly inadmissible to take जिज्ञासु to mean ब्रह्मजिज्ञासु here if we understand it in a particular way. Various stages of progress are adverted to in the works of all the schools as marking the different grades of enquirers, learners and seekers. Among them, study is the first, coupled with elementary knowledge, contentment, dispassion, faith and so on (श्रवणादि). The next one relates to the mastery of the scriptures by a careful and deep cogitation of their import (मनन). The third step is निदिध्यासन or contemplation. Here comes in, our ध्यानयोग. Four more are mentioned in वासिष्ठ which are grades of God-vision broadly stated.

Among the first three mentioned above, जिज्ञासु may very well stand for the stages Nos. 1 and 2. Then the argument of the text would not suffer. Says the Lord, "Even the mere Enquirer of Brahman (जिज्ञासु) yet studying and cogitating, is bound to make a steady progress. Much more so does it follow that the योगभ्रष्ट (who is a निदिध्यासु No.3 in the above enumeration) should suffer no lapse, but proceed forward.'

शब्दब्रह्म has been rendered by the Sankara commentators to mean the Vedas or that section of the same which deal with rites and rewards. The text speaks of transcending शब्दब्रह्म, so that, they impute to the text the signification that the seeker avoids work altogether.

Ramanujacharya takes this word to denote Matter (प्रकृति). This is explained by Desikar. The world comprises *names and forms*. The graded variety of which the Earth and Heavens consist are but gradation of matter distinguished by designations. A is a Deva. B is a Man. C is a Beast. The material body of each distinguishes him or it from others. The *Name* in each case is different because of the material embodiment varying. But for this *material* differentiation which शब्दब्रह्म brings into relief, all Jeevas are equal in essence, the highest Deity, Virincāh, being no higher or better than the lowest worm in spiritual essence. Thus,

according to Ramanujacharya, the Enquirer in question transcends प्रकृति (शब्दब्रह्म) and reaches Moksha.

The author of Vivriti interprets शब्दब्रह्म to mean the totality of rules prescribing acts and omissions to the religious observer. One who reaches *Moksha* transcends all rules of obligation, of course.

It may be seen that there is agreement between Vivriti and Ramanujacharya as to the nett result and conclusion of what the whole clause शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते means. "The Enquirer attains salvation" is that result and conclusion. But the proposition that all Jeevas are equal and that the graded differentiation in the Universe is no deeper than the physical Body is not at all assented to by Madhwas.

45) प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥

प्रयत्नात्	... with assiduity
यतमानः	... exerting
तु	... and
योगी	... the Yogin
संशुद्धकिल्बिषः	... cleansed of sin
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धः	... perfected after many a birth
ततः	... afterwards

याति	... reaches
परां	... Supreme
गतिं	... goal

“And the Yogin exerting himself with assiduity is cleansed of sin and becomes perfected after many a Birth. Then he reaches the Supreme goal.”

The last verse declared a bright future even for the mere enquirer (जिज्ञासु). He was said to be qualified for Moksha. If a mere wish to know of Yoga be emancipatory, there is then no need at all for the practice of Yoga, because one might easily *wish* and step into the goal. This position is not tenable. The Lord proceeds to correct this possible misapprehension by pointing out that the जिज्ञासु spoken of has to pass through *many a Birth* working hard at Yoga. It is a long course of assiduous labour whereby all sins and impurity should be first dispelled. Almost innumerable Births will be needed for the purpose after the man has become an earnest Enquirer. When at last he is blessed with God-vision, then and not till then, is the goal assured for him.

The Yoga that is spoken of in the text is *Meditation*. The word प्रयत्न stands for hard and assiduous application.

It may be seen that the present verse thus follows the last one in strict logical sequence. It corrects a possible mis-apprehension and draws

attention to the *prolonged preparation* that the Seeker has to pass through before he is in sight of the goal.

Some commentators explain the sequence in a different way. They think that the statement relating to जिज्ञासु in the last verse is complete in itself and is not continued. The Lord having used it as a piece of *a fortiori* argument abandons it and reverts to the main topic of योगभ्रष्ट, and continues that thread. It was said that such a Yogin is born somewhere either in a family of wealth and sanctity or in the family of a Yogin and Seer. Thus born, he resumes his Yoga, labours assiduously and reaches the end after many a birth.

Neelakanta thinks that the present verse is no part of Sri Krishna's reply to Arjuna's question. Having answered Arjuna and set at rest his doubts about योगभ्रष्ट, the Lord proceeds to speak of the Yogin who does not so fall off at all. It is conceivable that some Yogins hold on to Yoga with tenacity in spite of difficulties and obstacles. They continue to practise the exercises of breath, put down the cravings of the flesh with a strong hand, attain *Sidhis* like clairvoyance and the rest, and succeed in banishing their sins. The only reward of Yoga thus practised by force is to get purified from sin. Neelakanta is of opinion that the text relates to हठयोग and the sinlessness obtained as its reward and that the topic is one continued in fact from

verse 27 of chapter V relating to postures and breaths.

It is difficult to see why so much ingenuity should be expended in tracing the relevancy of the text under comment. Its logical connection is quite apparent. Why it should not be an exposition of the जिज्ञासु in respect to his further progress, it is hard to see. Why it should not be an exposition of the योगभ्रष्ट's further career after he takes birth in a suitable family, it is equally difficult to follow. No doubt, the verse speaks of 'assiduous exertion'. But his does not necessarily signify हठयोग.

The Lord has been dealing with Arjuna's question. The chapter is about to close. It is therefore appropriate that the thread of answering Arjuna's query should be continued to the end of the chapter. Hence I venture to think that Neelakanta has gone far out of the way to find out the object of the present verse.

Another commentator (noticed and criticized in Utkarsha Deepika) thinks that the Lord resumes here the old topic of *karma-yoga*, having finished all about ध्यानयोग with the previous verse. He construes प्रयत्नात् to mean the observances and doings of the *Karma-Yogin*. He renders यतमानः to mean not exertion or effort as it ordinarily signifies but a state of humility. मानं is pride and यत denotes "absence of the same."

The meaning is that योगभ्रष्ट is born in a suitable family and starts *Karma-Yoga* in humility, not feeling any arrogance over his birth and rank. This interpretation fails to take note of the important fact that the main topic of the present chapter relates to Meditation.

At this stage of the discourse, it is hard to see the appropriateness of dismissing ध्यानयोग from consideration and suddenly reverting to *karmayoga* by a verse or two. It is far more appropriate to understand the text as a continuation of the *Yogabharashta's* future career when he picks up again the ध्यानयोग from which he had fallen away.

I need hardly point out that the first three paragraphs immediately after translation represent Sri Madhwa's interpretation. According to him, संसिद्धि is success of ध्यानयोग.

Close upon this success, follows God-vision. ततः in the second line refers to this and says that *after it*, follows the supreme goal. In this connection, a short note Desikar on the word ततः may be noticed. He thinks that ततः does not here mean "afterwards" as it usually does. He construes the word to mean "From it" "From what?" it may be asked.*

The meaning of the second line then stands thus, "Having obtained success, he shakes off the mental distraction that had led him to abandon yoga,

and marches to the supreme goal." As to this presentment it has to be observed that the stage of shaking off mental distraction is an elementary stage long prior to the *success of Yoga* spoken of in the text.

Until the said distraction disappears, the man is not established in Yoga at all. The verse says that many births should be undergone after one is established in Yoga and before *Success* is within sight. To speak of mental steadiness which is virtually the beginning of the Yoga-practice as coming at the end of it and as a consequence of Yogic fruition (सिद्ध) looks inappropriate.

* The answer is suggested, from the distraction of mind suffered by the योगभ्रष्ट. (चलितमानसत्वात्).

46) तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी

ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी

तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

47) योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्भक्तेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥

तपस्विभ्यः	... than the observes of penance
अधिकः	... greater
योगी	... the yogin
ज्ञानिभ्यः	... than the men of learning
अपि	... even
मतः	... is deemed
अधिकः	... greater
कर्मिभ्यः	... than the men of rituals
च	... and
अधिकः	... greater
योगी	... the yogin
तस्मात्	... therefore
योगी	... the yogin
भव	... do you become
अर्जुन	... O! Arjuna
योगिनां	... of the yogins
अपि	... without exception
सर्वेषां	... all
मद्व्रतेन	... devoted to Me
अन्तरात्मना	... with the mind
श्रद्धावान्	... the person of faith
भजते	... worships
यः	... whoever
मां	... Me

सः ... He
 मे ... to Me
 युक्ततमः ... the best Yogin
 मतः ... regarded

46. "The Yogin is greater than the men of penance ; He is deemed greater than even the men of learning. The Yogin is also greater *than* the men of Karma (rituals). Therefore, do you become a Yogin, O Arjuna."

47. "Among all the Yogins without exception, he who worships Me full of faith with His Mind devoted to Me, is in My opinion, the best Yogin."

The Yogin is declared to be greater than the men of rituals, the men of penance and the men of learning, and Arjuna is therefore called upon to become a Yogin.

The Yogin thus praised is the Meditator. The main theme of this chapter is the Yoga of Meditation. It is therefore appropriate that the chapter should close with an encomium bestowed on him.

The word कर्मिभ्यः refers to the men ever engaged in Vedic rituals for the sake of temporal gain or rewards in after-life such as swarga. The statement that the Yogin is better than he, hardly calls for proof.

The word तपस्विभ्यः refers to persons who live a severe life of penance, and who fast and abstain from pleasures without much of study. They exhaust the list of observances that starve the flesh. They are undoubtedly inferior to persons who have studied and understood the Yoga of Meditation.

ज्ञानिभ्यः in this verse is a somewhat difficult word. Literally, it means the 'men of knowledge'. It is necessary to obtain a clear idea of what is the kind of knowledge that is contemplated.

Ramanujacharya thinks that the knowledge in question is something other than what relates to Self-realization or God-realization. It does not include the *Yoga of Jeevatma* nor the *Yoga of Paramatma*. Thus understood, the ज्ञान in question seems to connote the knowledge of secular sciences pure and simple.

This rendering is not commendable because there is no occasion to allude here to purely secular learning. In laying stress on the Yoga of Meditation and its high value, it is hardly appropriate to think here of Natural and Physical sciences and compare Yoga therewith. We should not forget that Sri Krishna is teaching us *Religion and Religious philosophy*. Nothing would, in such a context, be farther from His mind than the rigmarole in secular books of thought.

The members of the Sankara school are of opinion that the ज्ञान alluded to here is *scriptural learning*. We are not told whether the scriptural learning contemplated is one relating to Brahman or what relates to other subjects dealt with in the Shastras.

Madhusoodana adopts a construction partly in agreement with that of Sankaracharya and partly differing therefrom. He takes ज्ञानिभ्यः in two senses and, correspondingly, the word योगी also in two senses. If ज्ञान means *book-knowledge* (as it may) as distinguished from *God-vision* (Brahman-realization), then Yoga means God-vision and is obviously superior to the former.

If ज्ञान itself denotes God-vision (as it may), then योग means that condition where the seer has annihilated the *mind* and the *vasanas* (वासनाः) and become a Jeevan Mukta. The last-mentioned is the highest stage of Realization wherein the supremest bliss is enjoyed by the sage as a परमयोगी. Such a state is the one spoken of in verse 32 of this chapter. Madhusoodana thinks that the proposition in the text that "the Yogin is superior to the gnanin" is true in these two senses *viz.*, (1) that the Jeevan Mukta is superior to the mere sage of Realized Adwaita and (2) that the sage of realized Adwaita is superior to the mere scholar of book-learning." It may be seen that Madhusoodana's rendering

accords with that of Sankaracharya only in part, because the latter understands ज्ञान to signify *book-learning* alone.

Venkatanath adopts Madhusoodana's first exposition alone and ignores the second. He does not notice the circumstance that, by doing so, he is overthrowing Sankaracharya's interpretation.

This distinction between the mere sage of *Adwaitic Realization* and the *Jeevan Mukta* who is supposed to be a more advanced sage is untenable. That a seer who has realized Unity with Brahman has any more conquests yet to achieve in the direction of mental struggles seems out of tune with the fundamental notion of what Adwaitic Realization means. One would have thought that a person who *knows, feels and sees, nothing but Brahman* is at the very top and has no further heights to ascend. The reader is referred to verse 32 where this point has been discussed.

The author of Utkarsha Deepika criticises and refutes Madhusoodana in so far as the latter differs from Sankaracharya. It is very properly pointed out by the critic that the Yoga here contemplated is the *Yoga of Meditation* and not Yoga understood in any other possible sense. Hence the Yogin referred to is not the Seer of Adwaitic Realization either of the first stage or the Jeevan-Mukta stage.

If it be not admissible to take the *gnanin* in the text to denote the secular knower as

Ramanujacharya does, or the bookish scholar of Brahman as Sankaras think, what then is the meaning? Who is the 'knower' spoken of ?

Sri Madhwa thinks that the 'knower' spoken of is one who knows all about ध्यानयोग The meaning then is this :-

"One who takes to the Yoga of Meditation in ignorance of its character and without a study of its characteristics is inferior to one who knows all about it, although he has not yet begun to practise the same. One who has known ध्यानयोग and is also practising it is, of course, superior to both."

Sri Madhwa has quoted authority for his view that the *Yoga* here mentioned is ध्यानयोग, and in this particular respect Utkarsha Deepika happens to agree with him.

Verse 47 is the last verse of the chapter and closes also the theme of the first six chapters.

In the opinion of Sankara commentators, the Bhagavad Geeta deals with त्वं, with तत्, and with असि, in the three sections into which the eighteen chapters of the work are equally divided. The first section (chapters I to VI) is mainly concerned with त्वं the conditioned Atman. The second section (chapters 7 to 12) deals with तत् the Eswara. Thus understood, the verse 47 which is under review takes

leave of 'त्वं' and launches into view the *Path of Bhakti* that reveals तत् to the devotee.

Ramanujacharya does not harp on त्वं and तत्, but he adopts a language not very much distinguishable therefrom. He thinks that one class of Yoga, viz., what relates to the Jeevatman (Self-Realization) has been finished and that another kind of Yoga, viz., the one relating to Paramatman (God-Realization) is about to be started. The verse 47 under comment is said to be an aphoristic forecast of the Bhakti-Yoga section.

Exception has to be taken to the trend of thought that the theme so far has been to discuss 'त्वं' alone. It is also untenable that त्वं is going to be identified with तत्, understanding the higher or lower Brahman by this latter word. The reader will find this discussed at the beginning of chapter III.

Ramanujacharya's division of Yoga into the two kinds above mentioned is far from intelligible. 'Jeevatma-Yoga' is, to us, an unmeaning expression. The Jeeva ought not by himself to be ever an object of Meditation. No Yoga is right or proper unless God is the focus of the concentrated thoughts. Whenever there was occasion, it has been pointed out that आत्मा should mean God rather than the Individual Soul (Jeeva) as wrongly construed by Ramanujacharya. It has been also pointed out that in chapter VI relating to Meditation, the Yogin

contemplated is the Meditator of God and not the meditation of 'Self'.

According to Sri Madhwa, the text (verse 47) points out the superiority of those who worship God whole-heartedly without any desire of fruit. There are, of course, Yogins and Yogins broadly understood. Excluding from its signification the atheist and all men who have no faith in a supreme God, the *Yogin* still falls under three heads. (i) He may be a Bhakta of Sri Krishna in a general way and may still worship other Divinities for heavenly or temporal advantage. (ii) Or he may be a true Vaishnava and be ever praying to the Lord for heavenly or temporal gain. (iii) Or he may be a true Vaishnava ever worshipping him with no desire for sordid rewards but with a view to be saved from Samsara.

Of Yogins thus falling under various groups, the text under notice tells us that the last group of Bhaktas is the most commendable. Sri Krishna calls every member of that group a युक्ततमः the best of the Yogins.

Ramanujacharya's interpretation proceeds on a different line of thought altogether. In his view, the 'superior Yogin' (युक्ततम) is the Bhakti-Yogin not yet alluded to anywhere in the first section of 6 chapters. No doubt, four kinds of Yogins were alluded to in four verses from verses 29 to 32 (both inclusive). But none of them is the Bhakti Yogin who

is about to be introduced and discussed in chapters VII to XII. Therefore the rendering of the text should not be to the effect, "Among the Yogins, this one is the best", but it should be to the effect, "Better than any of the Yogins hereinbefore mentioned, is so and so the best."

The reader will please note the distinction. In the opinion of Sri Madhwa, every conceivable Yogin has been already alluded to. Among them, one class is chosen for commendation as the best. In the opinion of Ramanujacharya, the युक्तम in question has not hitherto been mentioned at all, so that योगिना in the genitive case should be understood in the ablative sense.

It seems to me to be an incorrect statement to say that the true worshipper of the God Supreme (युक्तमः) has not hitherto been spoken of at all. Many a verse could easily be recalled to memory, where Sri Krishna calls upon the devotee to devote his mind thoroughly, whole-heartedly and disinterestedly, to God.

Desikar anticipates this kind of objection and suggests that the युक्तम chosen for eulogy might be the Yogin described in verse 31, chapter VI, whose language is similar to that in the text. He soon dismisses this suggestion, however, by saying that the verses 29, 30, 31 and 32 (chapter VI) form a bunch, that they deal with four kinds of Yogins who represent four ascending grades of Yogic practice,

that the highest Yogin therein alluded to is of the group referred to in verse 32 (not the one of verse 31) and that the whole class spoken of consists of the Yogins who believe in the equality of all Jeevas and God. In these circumstances, Desikar argues that the Yogin now alluded to as the best and highest (युक्ततम) cannot be any one of the said four groups, but must be sought outside that circle.

The whole of this argument is untenable. Under verses 29 to 32, the point has been discussed whether Jeevas and God are in truth *equal in essence* and whether any Yogin ought to accept such a doctrine. It has also been pointed out that the intention of the said four verses is not to point out four degrees of Yogins at all. Nor is it right to say that Sri Krishna described by verse 32 a Yogin higher in rank than the one spoken of in verse 31. Hence the difficulties felt by Desikar by reason of verses 29 to 32 are not real.

In trying to refresh the memory and examining the descriptions given of all the Yogins hitherto spoken of, it is not necessary that we should confine our attention either to verses 29 to 32 or even to chapter VI alone. In chapter IV from verses 25 to 32, about a dozen different kinds of Yogins were described, as pointed out by Neelakanta. It is easily conceivable that, among them Sri Krishna commends here the truly unselfish worshipper of Narayana as the best.

Ramanujacharya thinks that not only is the word योगिनं of the genitive suffix to be construed in the ablative sense, but that सर्वेषां too should be so understood. The rendering according to him runs thus: "The whole-hearted worshipper of God is *better than* the Yogins and better also than all the others, namely, all ritualists (कर्मिभ्यः) and all penance-makers (तपस्विभ्यः)." The superiority emphasized is in relation to Yogins as well as to non-Yogins.

The objection to this rendering is obvious. If the man spoken of as युक्ततम is better than 'Yogins', it is hardly necessary to speak of him as superior to *non-yogins* also, for, the latter were clearly stated in the previous verse 46 to be inferior to all Yogins. If the Himalaya is stated to be higher than Dodda-Betta, there is no need to say that it is higher than a storied house. What is bigger than a mountain course bigger than a must is of and there is no force or in stating such an unnecessary proposition.

It seems to me therefore far more reasonable to take सर्वेषां to be an adjectival epithet of योगिनां so as to mean "all Yogins" than to take योगिनां to denote one group of men, and सर्वेषां to denote a totally distinct group of men inferior to *Yogins*.

In respect to this controversy, the interpretation adopted by the school of Sankaracharya agrees with that of Sri Madhwa.

Irrespective of this controversy, the reader will please note the main purport of this verse. The worshipper of God is praised here as the accomplished *Yogin*. That worship is intended to be whole-hearted. It is also intended to be based on true faith. These qualifications are of the highest significance. Thereby the selfish man whose little God is his own tiny self whose propitiation absorbs all his thoughts is censured as a non-yogin. Unless the mind which is a virtual counterpart of the spirit is wholly and fully devoted to God, the worshipper is but a superficial believer. Unless the worship is based on the bed-rock of Faith, no worshipper can help being a hypocrite. With him, the symbols of mere worship are but tokens of insincerity. Where there is true conviction and sincere faith, the worshipper is a religionist of sterling worth and possesses the elements that make for Yoga and emancipation.

END OF VI CHAPTER



SUMMARY

PART – I

(According to Sri Madhwa)

This chapter deals principally with the Yoga of Meditation. Karmayoga is a preparation for the course of Meditation. It is only after a course of habitual contemplation that God-vision is attained.

From verses 1 to 9 of this chapter, Sri Krishna recapitulates the salient points of *karmayoga* with a view to lead us on to the next step of ध्यानयोग.

It is a mistake that obtains largely even among men of learning, that the Ascetic of the Fourth Order alone is a Sanyasin, that such a man is above Work, that he has no sort of *Fire or Rites*, and that he alone is qualified for the Yoga of Meditation. These are wrong notions. The true Sanyasin is a person of any caste or order who has relinquished attachment to, and desire of, fruits. This definition embraces the Householder, of course. For, he is engaged in a life of work up to the hilt. He has only to relinquish *Desire of Fruit* to become a true Sanyasin.

The definition includes the man of the Fourth Asrama also, not because of the ascetics' robes he wears, but because he too may have renounced Desire of Fruit. The notion that the technical ascetic is above work is fallacious. No doubt, he does not

perform Agnihotra like the Grihasta. But his fire is within. When getting ordained, he duly withdraws the fire of the past order of life into his own body. He is bound to study, to teach and to meditate. These are his Fires.

In the same sense that Sankhya and Yoga were said to be virtually identical (verse No.4), Sanyasa and Yoga are also one and the same for all intents and purposes. Neither Yoga nor Sanyasa is possible without *Desires* being given up.

To work is the duty of every one who is on the road to the Yoga of Meditation. Unselfish work is the best preparation for him. When he is established in Dhyanyoga, he may relax his activities. Then the life of mental peace and equanimity is more appropriate for him. When he is able to keep sensual enjoyment thoroughly at bay without effort, there is the safe test that he is qualified fully for Dhyanyoga.

Every man should do his best to save his soul. Tossed in the waves of Samsara, it is likely that his soul will sink. By relying on God and purifying the Mind, let every one rescue this sinking ship. Mind makes or mars our destiny. God saves us or neglects us according as we wish. He is our best friend if we look to Him for redemption, and there is none other we can look to for refuge. In the tranquil mind of the pious man who has triumphed over his senses, God is ever present, ready for succour.

If a person be sure that he has transcended greed and that a nugget of gold is to him as much a matter of indifference as a clod of earth, then he may be sure of his fitness of indifference as a clod of earth, then he may be sure of his fitness for the Yoga of Meditation. If he can bear a friend or foe with equal calmness, if all men are to him but so many images of the Divine Presence, God being felt to be in them all, the same Perfection and excellence throughout, then his fitness is complete.

2nd Section, Verses 10 to 32.

This leads the topic to Dhyana Yoga. Let the person who is fit, start the practice of Meditation in a lonely place kept secret from the knowledge of the public. Let the practice be continuous as far as possible. His mind should, of course, be well under check. Let the spot chosen be clean and holy. The seat should be of a convenient height and fixed firmly. Where the Yogin actually sits, let it consist of a cloth, a deer-skin, and a mat of kusa-grass. Thereon he will sit down and try to fix his thoughts on a single point. The body, the head and the neck, will be held up erect and he will fix the gaze on the tip of his own nose. He will continue unperturbed and fearless. Celibacy is the proper life for him. He will fill his mind with love of God. Thus applying himself to a steady course, he is within sight of a supreme peace and will reach God.

In this life of discipline, his food and exercise should be simple and regulated ; so also, his wake-

fulness and sleep. Nothing but a well-ordered life will conduce to mental discipline and concentration.

When he is on the eve of the goal, his mind feels an intense satisfaction by getting fixed in God. It craves for no other object of thought. It shines bright like a windless flame and reveals God. When the mind is absolutely withdrawn from the external world and is absolutely pleased with and rejoices in God, the goal is reached. It is a bliss, ineffable and limitless, that the Yogin enjoys. Thus rejoicing in the inner light, no external disaster, calamity or mishap, however serious it may be, will affect or divert his mind.

This consummation is the end of a very long preparation and practice. Let the aspirant set about it slowly and gradually. When the mind wanders, let him bring it back and fix it again and again on God. Whichever sense plays the truant, let him gently deal with it and bring it round.

No other description of the consummation can be given than that it is a state of superb happiness. The touch of God opens the flood-gate of spiritual bliss so long held tight and withheld. Blessed with Yoga, he sees with his subtle vision the Divine Form immanent in himself and the entire creation. He sees Sri Krishna everywhere and sees all Beings as resting in Him. To the Yogin, Sri Krishna is not an indifferent Master, and, to Sri Krishna, the Yogin is not an indifferent servant. Worship is established

on the basis of one-pointed devotion. Such a Bhakta is a favourite of God, and even his lapses and faults are excused. He becomes the sage who loves all the world as he loves himself and looks on others' weal or woe as his own.

To the end.

Here Arjuna observes that the Mind, whose control is the vital point of the teaching, is such a vagabond. To curb it being well-nigh impossible, he wishes to know how mental conquest can be achieved. The Lord replies almost like Patanjalai, that *Practice* and *Disattachment* will reduce the Mind to submission. This leads Arjuna to put a further question. Having regard to the difficulty of subduing the mind, lapses must occur at times. What is the future of men who enter on the practice of Dhyānāyoga in earnestness and push on bravely only for a time? Suppose they break off after a time, are they lost for ever? This doubt being the subject of a question, the Lord replies that the Yogin does not suffer under the circumstances. In fact, the rule holds good universally, that no good thought, word, or deed, can ever produce anything but good. As in the case of imperfect Karmayoga (II, verse 40), so also in the case of imperfect Dhyānāyoga, the man is bound to reap a good crop of results.

For what he did in part he enjoys heavenly abodes according to his desert, and, at the end, takes birth in some pious and wealthy family where he obtains facilities to pick up the lost thread of Yoga.

Or he is born as the son of some Yogin and Seer whose instruction helps him to resume his Yoga. The old practice enables him to persevere undauntedly and progress quickly. After many a birth of persistence and progress, the great end is reached at last. The Yogin of Meditation is better than persons of mere work and of mere penance. He is better than one who has merely studied the Yoga Shastra and understood the subject of Meditation.

Of all kinds of whorshippers, the Yogin is the best, for he is a Bhakta of Sri Krishna. There are, of course, Bhaktas and Bhaktas. Some seek other Gods for the sake of profit. Others seek Sri Krishna for some low end in view. Others still, worship Sri Krishna with no end in view but His Grace and Moksha. Under the last class, comes the successful Yogin of Meditation, and he is the best.

PART – II, OTHER SCHOOLS

(a) Patanjali

The subject of this chapter looks similar to the main theme of Patanjali's Yoga-Sootras. It is well to note the chief points of similarity and disparity between the two.

Patanjali is a Dwaita teacher. He has inculcated beliefs in (1) God, (2) the individual soul called Purusha (or Jeeva), and (3) Prakriti the world of Matter. These are verities and are distinct from one another.

To subvert the mind by means of Samadhi is the end of Yoga. It is a long course of preparation. Eight accessories called *Ashtanga* help the practitioner in the Path.

No *Vedantin* objects to the methods laid down in this Shashtra and especially to those laid down for the initial stages of the practice.

It is to be observed, however, that God is not given due importance in this system. While Sri Madhwa holds that no Yoga is worth the name unless it centres on God, Patanjali does not accede to this. There is no objection to the Yogin choosing God as the focus of concentration. But this is not obligatory. As to the goal, Self-Realization is the end in view. To know the Prusha as distinct from Prakriti is the aim. That is the *Summum Bonum*. The condition of the emancipate is one of self-realization. No bliss is spoken of as enjoyed by the Yogin.

On these points, the Yoga of Bhagavad Geeta presents a different picture. In verses 5, 6, 7, 10, 15, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27 and 28 stress is laid on the Yogin *yoking his mind with God*. Sri Krishna draws attention repeatedly to the circumstance that the devotee should love Him and worship Him (see 14-15-30-31 &c). In verses 21, 27 and 28, reference is made to the exquisite bliss that rewards the labours of the Yogin at the time of fruition.

Even Madhusoodana who borrows profusely from Patanjali's work to elucidate many a point here,

admits that the points of view between his school and Patanjali are radically different in respect to the *Summum Bonum*.

(b) Advaita in this Chapter

It is common ground for all vedantins that the Yoga of Meditation is the main topic of the chapter.

The Yogin contemplated is however considered to be an ascetic (यति) of the Fourth Order. See verses 2-10-37 to 39.

This is in accordance with then general belief that none but a Yati is fit for Gnana and Dhyana (some exception is however allowed.) It is he that may renounce all work and lies under no obligation to work.

The chief tenet, *i.e.*, that *identity with Brahman is the goal*, is brought out under various verses. See verse 7, 27, 29, 30 &C.

That *work* is unreal and is therefore to be given up is pointed out in various places. Under verses 21 to 23 care is taken to remind us that meditation itself is unreal. Under verse 25, we are told that Samadhi itself is but a negative process of cleansing the mind of impurities whereby Brahman stands self-revealed. No fixity of thought in Brahman is really intended as a positive process.

Under verse 44, the aspirant is advised to get rid of Vedas wholly, or at least, the karma kanda.

In the section relating to the fallen Yogin (verse 37) we are told that the man spoken of is a kind of inferior संन्यासिन् only. He alone is supposed to be fixed up between the horns of a dilemma, having given up karma in entirety on the one hand and having failed to secure Adwaitic Realization on the other.

As I have observed already, Madhusoodana intersperses this chapter with ideas very largely borrowed from Patanjali. In doing so, he does not mind differing often from Sankaracharya himself, for which he is criticised by his own brethren.

(a) Whereas according to Sankaracharya, verses 19 to 23 deal with the conditions of एकाग्रता and निरोध described by Patanjali, Madhusoodana thinks that all the said verses should be understood as a description of निरोध only.

(b) Madhusoodana ventures under verse 20 to say that Sankaracharya's construction of यत्न is wrong. (असाधु is the word used).

(c) The intricate divisions and sub-divisions of the hypnotic mind elaborately set out by Patanjali are forced into various expressions in verse 27.

(d) Wherever reference occurs to Sri Krishna as the proper object of worship and meditation, Madhusoodana is ready with the suggestion that तत्त्वमसि is the lesson intended to be conveyed. (See verses 29, 30 and 31).

(e) Madhusoodana has caused quite a flutter among his brethren by the following theory :—

Under verse 29, he says that there are two kinds of Yogins who reach the end although they pursue two distinctly independent paths. One class comprises those who adopt the Yoga of Meditation as laid down by Patanjali. The other comprises those who simply study Vedanta under a preceptor and realize Adwaita. Of these, he says that Sankaracharya really approves of the latter course only although Sri Krishna has approved of both in verse 29. Verses 30 and 31 are interpreted in a fitful manner as now recommending the yoga method and now the Vedanta method.

In the proper place, these views have been discussed. But attention may only be drawn to the circumstance that in the opinion of Madhusoodana, Sankaracharya's view is at variance with that of Sri Krishna himself.

Under verse 32, Madhusoodana draws a distinction between a higher and a lower *seer*. Both are persons that have realized Adwaita. But one is no more than a Seer whose Prarabdha is preventing him from becoming a Jeevan-Mukta. The other is the seer who, having realized Unity, has further annihilated the Mind and all Vasanas (वासनाः =instincts) also, so that he has reached a state of the highest bliss as a जीवन्मुक्त. This is the person referred to as a परमयोगी in verse 32. According to Madhusoodana, Arjuna's doubt (Verses 33 and 34) relates to the difficulty of the *Lower Seer* becoming the *Higher Seer*.

The reply of the Lord meets the doubt by stating that Prarabdha or Fate gives way to Free Will and well-directed efforts. In respect to this line of thought dividing the perfected sage into degrees of perfection, the view of Madhusoodana has been sharply criticised by the author of Utkarsha Deepika.

For more instances, the reader is referred to the detailed notes themselves under various verses.

It is some relief that I have not got to notice Venkatanath here. In this chapter, he has spared Sri Madhwa. He is so lost in admiration of Madhusoodana that he meekly copies from the latter and presents them as his own original thoughts.

PART II, SECTION (c)

The School of Ramanujacharya

It is the creed of Kapila and Patanjali that Pradhana or Prakriti is the Doer and that the Atman does not work or act. Ramanujacharya is evidently indebted to the said system for the doctrine and has interpreted many a Geeta verse on this basis.

According to Ramanujacharya, the Yoga taught in this chapter is *Self-Realization*. It is the contemplation of Jeevatman that is advised and not a contemplation of God. In many a place, it is expressly pointed out that God is irrelevant to the subject treated of (e.g., verses 5, 6 and 7). In this chapter, the word *Atman* occurs very largely. See verses 5, 6, 7, 10, 15, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27 and 28. In almost all these instances, it is extremely appropriate to understand God as the object of

reference. Sri Madhwa has done so in fact. But Ramanujacharya sternly avoids the position. In verse 7 the word परमात्मा which is a most unambiguous term for God is so rendered as to signify the Jeeva. Under verse 27, the word ब्रह्म itself is construed by this Teacher to refer to the Jeeva. It is explained that the Jeeva is Brahman in the sense that he is other than अब्रह्म=Matter. It is also said that, although the Jeeva is atomic, he is really possessed of Infinite attributes in his essence.

The tenet that all Jeevas are equal to one another and equal also to God is brought in under verses 29, 30 and 31. Under verse 33, Arjuna is supposed to have disputed this equality of all Jeevas and God. How the Lord met this particular doubt is not, however, very clear. He is said to have advised *karmayoga* as the best aid to realize the universal equality in question. The self-realization that is the goal of Dhayanayoga is said to consist in knowing the soul to be different from the Body. In other words, to overcome Materialism is said to be the great object. This is also the goal emphasized by Patanjali.

In the opinion of this Teacher, nowhere in the first six chapters has Bhakti Yoga been adverted to. It is throughout the Jeevatma that has been treated of. The next six chapters are going to take up Bhakti Yoga. Hence the last verse, *viz.*, 47 of the present chapter, foreshadows this subject. The Bhakti Yogin is herein extolled as being better than any Yogin or non-yogin yet spoken of.





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